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EVIDENCE

OF THE

TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

DERIVED FROM THE LITERAL FULFILMENT OF

PROPHECY;

PARTICULARLY AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE

HISTORY OF THE JEWS,

AND BY THE

DISCOVERIES OF RECENT TRAVELLERS.

BY

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Opinionum commenta dies delet, Naturæ judicia confirmat.
Cicero.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages are presented to the public, in the hope that they may not be altogether unproductive of good. The idea of the propriety of such a publication was first suggested to the writer in consequence of a conversation with a person who disbelieved the truth of Christianity, but whose mind seemed to be considerably affected, even by a slight allusion to the argument from Prophecy. Having endeavoured in vain to obtain, for his perusal, any concise treatise on the Prophecies, considered exclusively as a matter of EVIDENCE—and having failed in soliciting others to undertake the work, who were far better qualified for the execution of it—the writer was induced to make the attempt, and to endeavour to bring the object into view.

In the following Essay the argument is brought within narrow limits. Those prophecies are not included which were fulfilled previously to the era of the last of the prophets, or of which the meaning is obscure, or the application doubtful. And the only question to be resolved is—Whether there be any clear predictions, literally accomplished, which, from their nature and their number, demonstrate that the Scriptures are the dictates of inspiration, or that the Spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

The researches of travellers in Palestine have been so abundant, and the prophecies thereby verified are so numerous and distinct, that no labour is requisite for

elucidating their truth, but to examine and compare the predictions and the events; and the literal prophecies need no other interpretation than the literal facts.

Though well aware that any one who seeks to illustrate the *external* evidence of the truth of Christianity may be said to stand only at the outer porch of the temple of Christian faith, yet the writer of these pages humbly hopes that he may be permitted to point to a way, without a stumbling-block, by which some who may be merely the proselytes of the gate, or others who would pass altogether by, may be enabled to enter into that edifice of divine architecture, fitly framed together, which is filled with all the riches of mercy, with all the beauties of holiness, and with all the light of truth.

The author having recently visited[1] some of the scenes of scriptural prophecy, the present edition is considerably enlarged. Lord Claud Hamilton, who travelled at the same time in the East, and traversed regions which the writer did not visit, having kindly given the use of his valuable journal, his descriptions of Petra and Ammon enhance the value of the treatise, and will be read with much interest.

[1] Together with the Rev. Dr. Black, the Rev. Robert M. M'Cheyne, and the Rev. Andrew Bonar, being a Deputation from the Church of Scotland to Palestine and other countries, to make inquiry respecting the Jews.

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EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY.

INTRODUCTION.

No subject can be of greater importance, either to the unbeliever or to the Christian, than an investigation of the evidence of Christianity. The former, if his mind be not fettered by the strongest prejudice, and if he be actuated in the least by a spirit of free and fair inquiry, cannot disavow his obligation to examine its claim to a divine origin. He cannot rest secure in his unbelief, to the satisfaction of his own mind, without manifest danger of the most fatal error, till he has impartially weighed all the reasons that may be urged on its behalf. The proof of a negative is acknowledged and felt to be difficult; and it can never, in any case, be attained till all direct and positive evidence to the contrary be completely destroyed. And this, at least, must be done before it can be proved that Christianity is not true. Without this careful and candid examination, all gratuitous assumptions and fanciful speculations, all hypothetical reasonings or analogical inferences, that seem to militate against the truth of religion, may be totally erroneous; and though they may tend to excite a transient doubt, they cannot justify a settled unbelief. Being exclusively regarded, or being united to a misapprehension of the real nature of the Christian religion, the understanding may embrace them as convincing; but such conviction is neither rational nor consistent, it is only a misapplication of the name of freethinking. For, as Christianity appeals to reason and submits its credentials,—as it courts and commands the most trying

scrutiny, that scrutiny the unbeliever is bound, upon his own principles, to engage in. If he be fearless of wavering in his unbelief, he will not shrink from the inquiry; or, if truth be his object, he will not resist the only means of its attainment, that he may either disprove what he could only doubt of before, or yield to the conviction of positive evidence and undoubted truth. This unhesitating challenge religion gives; and that man is neither a champion of infidelity, nor a lover of wisdom or of truth, who will disown or decline it.

To the believer such a subject is equally important and interesting. The apathy of nominal Christians, in the present day, is often contrasted with the zeal of those who first became obedient to the faith. The moral influence of the Christian religion is not what it has been, or what it ought to be. The difference in the character of its professors may be greatly attributed to a fainter impression and less confident assurance of its truth. Those early converts who witnessed the miracles of our Lord and of his apostles, and heard their divine doctrine, and they who received the immediate tradition of those who both saw and heard them, and who could themselves compare the moral darkness from which they had emerged, with the marvellous light of the gospel, founded their faith upon evidence; possessed the firmest conviction of the truth; were distinguished by their virtues, as well as by their profession, according to the testimony even of their enemies;[1] cherished the consolations, and were inspired by the hopes of religion; and lived and died, actuated by the hope of immortality and the certainty of a future state. The contrast, unhappily, needs no elucidation. The lives of professing Christians, in general, cease to add a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, while they have often been the plea of infidels against it. Yet religion and human nature are still the same as they were when men were first called Christians, and when the believers in

[1] Plinii Epist. lib. x. ep. 97; Tertul. Ap. c. 2; Gibbon, c. 15, vol. ii. p. 315, 317, edit. Lond. 1815.

Jesus dishonoured not his name. But they sought more than a passive and unexamining belief. They knew in whom they believed; they felt the power of every truth which they professed. And the same cause, in active operation, would be productive of the same effects. The same strong and unwavering faith established on reason and conscious conviction, would be creative of the same peace and joy in believing, and of all their accompanying fruits. And as a mean of destroying the distinction, wherever it exists, between the profession and the reality of faith, it is ever the prescribed duty of all, who profess to believe in the gospel, to search and to try, "to prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good;" and to "be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them."

To the sincere Christian it must ever be an object of the highest interest to search into the reason of his hope. The farther that he searches, the firmer will be his belief. Knowledge is the fruit of mental labour, the food and the feast of the mind. In the pursuit of knowledge, the greater the excellence of the subject of inquiry, the deeper ought to be the interest, the more ardent the investigation, and the dearer to the mind the acquisition of the truth. And that knowledge which immediately affects the soul, which tends to exalt the moral nature and enlarge the religious capacities of man, which pertains to eternity, which leads not merely to the contemplation of the works of the great Architect of the universe, but seeks also to discover an accredited revelation of his will and a way to his favour, and which rests not in its progress till it find assurance of faith or complete conviction, a witness without, as well as a witness within, is surely "like unto a treasure which a man found hid in a field, and sold all that he had and bought it." And it is delightful to have every doubt removed by the positive proof of the truth of Christianity, —to feel that conviction of its certainty, which infidelity can never impart to her votaries,—and to receive that

assurance of the faith, which is as superior in the hope which it communicates, as in the certainty on which it rests, to the cheerless and disquieting doubts of the unbelieving mind. Instead of being a mere prejudice of education, which may be easily shaken, belief, thus founded on reason, becomes fixed and immovable; and all the scoffings of the scorner, and speculations of the infidel, lie as lightly on the mind, or pass as imperceptibly over it, and make as little impression there, as the spray upon a rock.

In premising a few remarks, introductory to a sketch of the prophecies, little can be said on the general and comprehensive evidence of Christianity. The selection of a part implies no disparagement to the whole. Ample means for the confirmation of our faith are within our reach. Newton, Bacon, and Locke, whose names stand pre-eminent in human science, to which they opened a path not penetrated before, found proof sufficient for the complete satisfaction of *their* minds. The internal evidence could not be stronger than it is. There are manifold instances of undesigned coincidences in the Acts and Epistles of the apostles, which give intrinsic proof that they are genuine and authentic. No better precepts, no stronger motives than the gospel contains, have ever been inculcated. No system of religion has ever existed in the world at all to be compared to it; and none can be conceived more completely adapted to the necessities and nature of a sinful being like man, endowed with the faculty of reason and with capacities of religion. And the miracles were of such a nature as excluded the idea of artifice or delusion;—they were wrought openly in the presence of multitudes; they testified the benevolence of a Saviour, as well as the power of the Son of God. The disciples of Christ could not be deceived respecting them; for they were themselves endowed with the gift of tongues, and of prophesying, and with the power of working miracles; they devoted their lives to the propagation of the gospel, in opposition to every human interest, and amidst continual sufferings. The

Christian religion was speedily propagated throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire, and even beyond its bounds. The written testimony remains of many who became converts to the truth, and martyrs to its cause: and the most zealous and active enemies of our faith acknowledged the truth of the miracles, and attributed them to the agency of evil spirits. Yet all this accumulation of evidence is disregarded, and every testimony is rejected unheard, because ages have since intervened, and because it bears witness to works that are miraculous. Though these general objections against the truth of Christianity have been ably answered and exposed, yet they may fairly be adduced as confirmatory of the proof which results from the fulfilment of prophecy, and as binding infidels to its investigation. For it supplies that evidence which the enemies of religion, or those who are weak in the faith, would require, which applies to the present time, and which stands not in need of any testimony,—which is always attainable by the researches of the inquisitive, and often obvious to the notice of all,—and which past, present, and coming events alike unite in verifying;—it affords an increasing evidence, and receives additional attestations in each succeeding age.

But, while some subterfuge has been sought for evading the force of the internal evidence, and the conviction which a belief in the miracles would infallibly produce, and while every collateral proof is neglected, the prophecies also are set aside without investigation, as of too vague and indefinite a nature to be applied, with certainty, to the history either of past ages or of the present. A very faint view of the prophecies of the Old and New Testament will suffice to rectify this equally easy and erroneous conclusion. Although some of the prophecies, separately considered, may appear ambiguous and obscure, yet a general view of them all —of the harmony which prevails throughout the prophecies, and of their adaptation to the facts they predict —must strike the mind of the most careless inquirer

with an apprehension that they are the dictates of Omniscience. But many of the prophecies are as explicit and direct as it is possible that they could have been; and, as history confirms their truth, so they sometimes tend to its illustration, of which our future inquiry will furnish us with examples. And if the prophetical part of Scripture, which refers to the rise and fall of kingdoms, had been more explicit than it is, it would have appeared to encroach on the free agency of man;—it would have been a communication of the foreknowledge of events which men would have grossly abused and perverted to other purposes rather than to the establishment of the truth; and, instead of being a stronger evidence of Christianity, it would have been considered as the cause of the accomplishment of the events predicted, by the unity and combination it would have excited among Christians; and thus have afforded to the unbeliever a more reasonable objection against the evidence of prophecy than any that can be now alleged. It is in cases wherein they could not be abused, or wherein the agents instrumental in their fulfilment were utterly ignorant of their existence, that the prophecies are as descriptive as history itself. But whenever the knowledge of future events would have proved prejudicial to the peace and happiness of the world, they are couched in allegory, which their accomplishment alone can expound; and drawn with that degree of light and shade that the faithfulness of the picture may best be seen from the proper point of observation, the period of their completion. Prophecy must thus, in many instances, have that darkness which is impenetrable at first, as well as that light which shall be able to dispel every doubt at last; and, as it cannot be an evidence of Christianity until the event demonstrate its own truth, it may remain obscure till history become its interpreter, and not be perfectly obvious till the fulfilment of the whole series with which it is connected. But the general and often sole objection against the evidence from the prophecies, that they are all vague and ambiguous,

may best be answered and set aside by a simple exhibition of those numerous and distinct predictions which have been literally accomplished; and therefore to this limited view of them the following pages shall chiefly be confined.

Little need be said on the nature of proof from prophecy. That it is the effect of divine interposition cannot be disputed. It is equivalent to any miracle, and is of itself evidently miraculous. The foreknowledge of the actions of intelligent and moral agents is one of the most incomprehensible attributes of the Deity, and is exclusively a divine perfection. The past, the present, and the future are alike open to his view, and to his alone; and there can be no stronger proof of the interposition of the Most High than that which prophecy affords. Of all the attributes of the God of the universe, his prescience has bewildered and baffled the most all the powers of human perception; and an evidence of the exercise of this perfection in the revelation of what the infinite Mind alone could make known, is the seal of God, which can never be counterfeited, affixed to the truth which it attests. Whether that evidence has been afforded, is a matter of investigation; but if it has unquestionably been given, the effect of superhuman agency is apparent, and the truth of what it was given to prove, does not admit of a doubt. If the prophecies of the Scriptures can be proved to be genuine; if they be of such a nature as no foresight of man could possibly have predicted; if the events foretold in them were described hundreds or even thousands of years before those events became parts of the history of man; and if the history itself correspond with the prediction; then the evidence which the prophecies impart is a sign and a wonder to every age: no clearer testimony or greater assurance of the truth can be given; and if men do not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. Even if one were to rise from the dead, evidence of the fact must precede conviction: and if

the mind be satisfied of the truth of prophecy, the result, in either case, is the same. The voice of Omnipotence alone could call the dead from the tomb; the voice of Omniscience alone could tell all that lay hid in dark futurity, which to man is as impenetrable as the mansions of the dead; and both are alike the voice of God.

Of the antiquity of the Scriptures there is the amplest proof. The books of the Old Testament were not, like other writings, detached and unconnected efforts of genius and research, or mere subjects of amusement or instruction. They were essential to the constitution of the Jewish state; the possession of them was a great cause of the peculiarities of that people; and they contain their moral and their civil law, and their history, as well as the prophecies, of which they were the records and the guardians. They were received by the Jews as of divine authority; and as such they were published and preserved. They were proved to be ancient eighteen hundred years ago.[1] And in express reference to the prophecies concerning the Messiah, contained in them, they were denominated by Tacitus, the *ancient* writings of the priests. Instead of being secluded from observation, they were translated into Greek above two hundred and fifty years before the Christian era; and they were read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day. The most ancient part of them was received as divinely inspired, and was preserved in their own language, by the Samaritans, who were at enmity with the Jews. They have ever been sacredly kept unaltered, in a more remarkable degree, and with more scrupulous care, than any other compositions whatever.[2] And the antiquity

[1] Josephus c. Apion.

[2] There are not wanting proofs of the most scrupulous care of the Hebrew text on the part of the Jews: they have counted the large and small sections, the verses, the words, and even the letters in some of the books. They have likewise reckoned which is the middle letter of the Pentateuch, which is the middle clause of each book, and how many times each letter of the alphabet occurs in all the Hebrew Scriptures. This, at least, shows that

and authenticity of them rest so little on Christian testimony alone, that it is from the records of our enemies that they are confirmed, and from which is derived the evidence of our faith. Even the very language in which the Old Testament Scriptures were originally written, had ceased to be spoken before the coming of Christ. No stronger evidence of their antiquity could be alleged, than what is indisputably true; and if it were to be questioned, every other truth of ancient history must first be set aside.

That the prediction was prior to the event, many facts in the present state of the world abundantly testify; and many prophecies remain even yet to be fulfilled. But, independently of external testimony, the prophecies themselves bear intrinsic marks of their antiquity and of their truth. Predictions concerning the same events are sometimes delivered by a succession of prophets. Sometimes the same prophecy concerning any city or nation gradually meets its fulfilment during a long protracted period, where the truth of the prediction must be unfolded by degrees. They are, in general, so interwoven with the history of the Jews; so casually introduced in their application to the surrounding nations; so frequently concealed in their purport, even from the honoured but unconscious organs of their communication, and preserving throughout so entire a consistency; so different in the modes of their narration, and each part preserving its own particular character; so delivered without form or system; so shadowed sometimes under symbols; so complete when compared and combined; so apparently unconnected when disjoined, and revealed in such a variety of modes and expressions, that the very manner of their conveyance forbids the idea of artifice; or if they were false, nothing could admit of more easy detection; if true, nothing could be more impossible to have been conceived by man. And they must either be a number of incoherent and detached pretensions to

the Jews were religiously careful to preserve the literal sense of Scripture.—(Allen's Modern Judaism; Simon, Crit. Hist. 6, 26.)

inspiration, that can bear no scrutiny, and that have no reference to futurity but what deceivers might have devised: or else, as the only alternative, they give such a comprehensive, yet minute representation of future events—so various, yet so distinct—so distant, yet so true—that none but He who knoweth all things could have revealed them to man, and none but those who have hardened their hearts and closed their eyes, can forbear from feeling and from perceiving them to be credentials of the truth, clear as light from heaven. To justify their pretensions to their contemporaries, the prophets referred, on particular occasions, to some approaching circumstance as a proof of their prophetic spirit, and as a symbol or representation of a more distant and important event. They could thus be distinguished in their own age from false prophets, if their predictions were then true: and they ventured to raise, from the succeeding ages of the world, that veil which no uninspired mortal could touch. They spoke of a deliverer of the human race; they described the desolation of cities and of nations, whose greatness was then unshaken, and whose splendour has ever since been unrivalled; and their predictions were of such a character, that time would infallibly refute or realize them.

Religion deserves a candid examination, and it demands nothing more. The fulfilment of prophecy forms part of the evidence of Christianity. And are the prophecies false, or are they true? Is their fallacy exposed, or their truth ratified by the event? And whether are they thus proved to be the delusions of impostors, or the dictates of inspiration? To the solution of these questions a patient and impartial inquiry alone is requisite; reason alone is appealed to, and no other faith is here necessary but that which arises as the natural and spontaneous fruit of rational conviction. The man who withholds this inquiry, and who will not be impartially guided by its result, is not only reckless of his fate, but devoid of that of which he prides himself the most,—even of all true liberality of sentiment: he is the bigot

of infidelity, who will not believe the truth because it is the truth. It is incontestable, that, in a variety of ways, a marvellous change has taken place in the religious and political state of the world since the prophecies were delivered. A system of religion, widely different from any that then existed, has emanated from the land of Judea, and has spread over the civilized world. Many remarkable circumstances attended its origin and its progress. The history of the life and character of its Founder, as it was written at the time, and acknowledged as authentic by those who believed on him, is so completely without a parallel, that it has often attracted the admiration and excited the astonishment of infidels; and one of them even asks, if it be possible that the sacred Personage, whose history the Scripture contains, should be himself a mere man; and acknowledges that the fiction of such a character is more inconceivable than the reality.[1] He possessed no temporal power,—he inculcated every virtue,—his life was spotless and perfect as his doctrine,—he was put to death as a criminal. His religion was rapidly propagated,—his followers were persecuted, but their cause prevailed. The purity of his doctrine was maintained for a time, but it was afterwards corrupted. Yet Christianity has effected a great change. Since its establishment, the worship of heathen deities has ceased; all sacrifices have been abolished, even where human victims were immolated before; and slavery, which prevailed in every state, is now unknown in every Christian country throughout Europe;—knowledge has been increased, and many nations have been civilized. The Christian religion has been extended over a great part of the world, and it is still enlarging its boundary; and the Jews, though it originated among them, yet continue to reject it. In regard to the political changes or revolutions of states, since the prophecies concerning them were delivered,—Jerusalem was destroyed and laid waste by the Romans: the land of Palestine, and the surrounding countries,

[1] Rousseau's Emilius, vol. ii. p. 215, quoted in Brewster's Testimonies, p. 133.

are now thinly inhabited, and, in comparison of their former fertility, have been almost converted into deserts: the Jews have been scattered among the nations, and remain to this day a dispersed and yet a distinct people: Egypt, one of the first and most powerful of nations, has long ceased to be a kingdom: Nineveh is no more: Babylon is now a ruin: the Persian empire succeeded to the Babylonian: the Grecian empire succeeded to the Persian, and the Roman to the Grecian: the old Roman empire has been divided into several kingdoms: Rome itself became the seat of a government of a different nature from any other that ever existed in the world: the doctrine of the gospel was transformed into a system of spiritual tyranny and of temporal power: the authority of the pope was held supreme in Europe for many ages: the Saracens obtained a sudden and mighty power; overran great part of Asia and of Europe; and many parts of Christendom suffered much from their incursions: the Arabs maintain their warlike character, and retain possession of their own land: the Africans are a humble race, and are still treated as slaves: colonies have been spread from Europe to Asia, and are enlarging there: the Turkish empire attained to great power; it continued to rise for the space of several centuries, but it paused in its progress, has since decayed, and now evidently verges to its fall. These form some of the most prominent and remarkable facts of the history of the world from the ages of the prophets to the present time; and if to each and all of them, from the first to the last, an index is to be found in the prophecies, we may warrantably conclude that they could only have been revealed by the Ruler among the nations, and that they afford more than human testimony of the truth of Christianity.

In the following treatise, an attempt is made to give a general and concise sketch of such of the prophecies as have been distinctly foretold and clearly fulfilled, and as may be deemed sufficient to illustrate the truth of Christianity. And, if one unbeliever be led the first step to a full and candid investigation of the truth,—if

one doubting mind be convinced,—if one Christian be confirmed more strongly in his belief,—if one ray of the hope of better things to come arise from hence, to enliven a single sorrowing heart,—if one atom be added to the mass of evidence, the author of this little work will neither have lost his reward nor spent his labour in vain.

CHAPTER II.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

It is one of the remarkable peculiarities of the Jewish religion, that while it claimed superiority over every other, and was distinguished from them all, as alone inculcating the worship of the only living and true God, and while it was perfectly suited to the purpose for which it was designed, it acknowledged that it was itself only preparatory to a future, a better, and perfect revelation. It was professedly adapted and limited to one particular people;—it was confined, in many of its institutions, to the land of Judea; its morality was incomplete;—its ritual observances were numerous, oppressive, and devoid of any inherent merit;[1] and being partial, imperfect, and temporary, and full of promises of better things to come, for which it was the only means of preparing the way, it was evidently intended to be the presage of another. It was not even calculated of itself to fulfil the promise which it records as given unto Abraham, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed; though its original institution was founded

[1] "Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols; wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live." (Ezek. xx. 24, 25; Acts xv. 10.)

upon this promise, and although the accomplishment of it was the great end to be promoted, by the distinction and separation of his descendants from all the nations of the earth. But it was subservient to this end, though it could not directly accomplish it; for the coming of a Saviour was the great theme of prophecy, and the universal belief of the Jews. From the commencement to the conclusion of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, it is predicted or prefigured. They represent the first act of divine justice, which was exercised on the primogenitors of the human race, as mingled with divine mercy. Before their seclusion from paradise, a gleam of hope was seen to shine around them, in the promise of a suffering but triumphant Deliverer. To Abraham the same promise was conveyed in a more definite form. Jacob spoke distinctly of the coming of a Saviour. Moses, the legislator and leader of the Hebrews, prophesied of another lawgiver that God was to raise up in a future age.[1] And while these early and general predictions occur in the historical part of Scripture, which sufficiently mark the purposed design of the Mosaic dispensation, the books that are avowedly prophetic are clearly descriptive, as a minuter search will attest, of the advent of a Saviour, and of every thing pertaining to the kingdom he was to establish. Many things, apparently contradictory and irreconcilable, are foretold as referring to a great Deliverer, whose dignity, whose character, and whose office were altogether peculiar, and in whom the fate of human nature is represented as involved. Many passages, that can bear no other application, clearly testify of him: Thy king cometh—thy salvation cometh—the Redeemer shall come to Zion—the Lord cometh—the messenger of the covenant, he shall come—blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,[2] are expressions that occur throughout the prophecies. These unequivocally speak of the coming of a Saviour. But

[1] Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

[2] Zech. ix. 9; Isa. lix. 20; Isa. lxii. 11; Mal. iii. 1; Isa. xxxv. 4; Ps. cxviii. 26; Dan. ix. 25, 26.

were every other proof wanting, the prophecy of Daniel is sufficient incontrovertibly to establish the fact, which we affirm in the very words,—that the coming *of the Messiah* is foretold in the Old Testament. The same fact is confirmed by the belief of the Jews in every age. It is so deeply and indelibly impressed on their minds, that notwithstanding the dispersion of their race throughout the world, and the disappointment of their hopes for eighteen hundred years after the prescribed period of his coming, the expectation of the Messiah still forms a bond of union which no distance can dissolve, and which no earthly power can destroy.

As the Old Testament *does* contain prophecies of a Saviour that was to appear in the world, the only question to be resolved is, whether all that it testifies of him be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ? On a subject so interesting, so extensive and important, which has been so amply discussed by many able divines, the reader is referred to the works of Barrow, of Pearson, and of Clarke. A summary view must be very imperfect and incomplete; but it is here given, as it may serve, to the general reader, to exhibit the connection between the Old and the New Testament, and as of itself it may be deemed conclusive of the argument in favour of Christianity.

A few of the leading features of the prophecies concerning Christ, and their fulfilment, shall be traced; as they mark the time of his appearance, the place of his birth, and the family out of which he was to arise; his life and character, his miracles, his sufferings, and his death; the nature of his doctrine, the design and the effect of his coming, and the extent of his kingdom.

The time of the Messiah's appearance in the world, as predicted in the Old Testament, is defined by a number of concurring circumstances, that fix it to the very date of the advent of Christ. The last blessing of Jacob to his sons, when he commanded them to gather themselves together that he might tell them what should befall them in the last days, contains this prediction con-

cerning Judah: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."[1] The date fixed by this prophecy for the coming of Shiloh, or the Saviour, was not to exceed the time that the descendants of Judah were to continue a united people—that a king should reign among them—that they should be governed by their own laws, and that their judges were to be from among their brethren. The prophecy of Malachi adds another standard for measuring the time; "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."[2] No words can be more expressive of the coming of the promised Messiah; and they as clearly imply his appearance in the temple before it should be destroyed. But it may also be here remarked, that Malachi was the last of the prophets: with his predictions the vision and the prophecy were sealed up, or the canon of the Old Testament was completed. Though many prophets immediately preceded him, after his time there was no prophet in Israel; but all the Jews, whether of ancient or modern times, look for a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord, immediately before his coming. The long succession of prophets had drawn to a close; and the concluding words of the Old Testament, subjoined to an admonition to remember the law of Moses, import that the next prophet would be the harbinger of the Messiah. Another criterion of the time is thus imparted. In regard to the advent of the Messiah, before the destruction of the second temple, the words of Haggai are remarkably explicit: "The Desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former; and in this place will I give peace."[3] The contrast which the prophet had just

[1] Gen. xlix. 10. [2] Mal. iii. 1. [3] Hag. ii. 7, 9.

drawn between the glory of Solomon's temple and that which had been erected in its stead, to which he declares it was in comparison as nothing; the solemn manner of its introduction, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth;" the excellency of the latter house excelling that of gold and silver; the expression so characteristic of the Messiah, the "desire of all nations;" and the blessing of peace that was to accompany his coming, all tend to denote that He alone is spoken of, who was the hope of Israel, and of whom all the prophets did testify, and that his presence would give to that temple a greater glory than that of the former. The Saviour was thus to appear, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, during the time of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, previous to the demolition of the temple, and immediately subsequent to the next prophet. But the time is rendered yet more definite. In the prophecies of Daniel, the kingdom of the Messiah is not only foretold as commencing in the time of the fourth monarchy or Roman empire; but the express number of years that were to precede his coming is plainly intimated: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks."[1] Computation by weeks of years was common among the Jews, and every seventh was the sabbatical year; seventy weeks thus amounted to four hundred and ninety years. In these words the prophet marks the very time, and uses the very name of Messiah the Prince; so entirely is all ambiguity done away.

The plainest inference may be drawn from these pro-

[1] Dan. ix. 24, 25.

phecies. All of them, while, in every respect, they presuppose the most perfect knowledge of futurity; while they were unquestionably delivered and publicly known for ages previous to the time to which they referred; while there is the testimony, from great authorities among the Jews, of their application to the time of the Messiah;[1] and while they refer to different contingent and unconnected events, utterly undeterminable and inconceivable by all human sagacity;—accord in perfect unison to a single precise period, where all their different lines terminate at once—the very fulness of time when Jesus appeared. A king then reigned over the Jews in their own land; they were governed by their own laws; and the council of their nation exercised its authority and power. Before that period, the other tribes were extinct or dispersed among the nations. Judah alone remained, and the last sceptre in Israel had not then departed from it. Every stone of the temple was then unmoved: it was the admiration of the Romans, and might have stood for ages. But in a short space, all these concurring testimonies to the time of the advent of the Messiah passed away. About the very time when Christ, in the twelfth year of his age, first publicly appeared in the temple, about his Father's business, Archelaus the king was dethroned and banished, Coponius was appointed procurator, and the kingdom of Judea, the last remnant of the greatness of Israel, was debased into a part of the province of Syria.[2] The sceptre was smitten from the hands of the tribe of Judah; the crown fell from their heads; their glory departed; and soon after the death of Christ, of their temple one stone was not left upon another; their commonwealth itself became as complete a ruin, and was broken in pieces; and they have ever since been scattered throughout the world, a name, but not a nation. After the lapse of nearly four hundred years posterior to

[1] Grotius de Verit. l. v. c. xiv; Opera, tom. iv. p. 80, ed. Lond. 1679. Pearson on the Creed, art. ii.

[2] Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. c. 15, (al. 13.) xviii. 1.

the time of Malachi, another prophet appeared, who was the herald of the Messiah. And the testimony of Josephus confirms the account given in Scripture of John the Baptist.[1] Every mark that denoted the time of the coming of the Messiah, was erased soon after the crucifixion of Christ, and could never afterwards be renewed. And, with respect to the prophecies of Daniel, it is remarkable, at this remote period, how little discrepancy of opinion has existed among the most learned men, as to the space from the time of the passing out of the edict to rebuild Jerusalem, after the Babylonish captivity, to the commencement of the Christian era, and the subsequent events foretold in the prophecy. Our design precludes detail: but the minute coincidence of the narrative of the New Testament and the history of the Jews, with the subdivisions of time which it enumerates, are additional attestations of its general accuracy as applicable to Christ. This coincidence is the more striking, as it is unnoticed by the relaters of the facts which establish it, and it has been left, without the possibility of any adaptation of the events, to the discovery of modern chronologists. The following observations of Dr. Samuel Clarke, partly communicated to him, as he acknowledges, by Sir Isaac Newton, elucidate this prophecy so clearly, that every reader will forgive their insertion:—"When the angel says to Daniel, *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, &c.;* was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king, (when Ezra went up from Babylon unto Jerusalem with a commission to restore the government of the Jews,) to the death of Christ, (from *ann. Nabon.* 290, to *ann. Nabon.* 780,) should be precisely 490 (seventy weeks of) years? When the angel tells Daniel, that in threescore and two weeks, the street (of Jerusalem) should be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times; (but this, in troublous times not like those that should be under Messiah the Prince when he should come to reign;) was

[1] Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 5, (6,) 2.

this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the 28th year of Artaxerxes, when the walls were finished, to the birth of Christ, (from *ann. Nabon.* 311 to 745,) should be precisely 434 (62 weeks of) years? When Daniel farther says, And he shall confirm (or, nevertheless he shall confirm) the covenant with many for one week; was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the death of Christ (*ann. Dom.* 33) to the command given first to Peter to preach to Cornelius and the Gentiles, (*ann. Dom.* 40,) should be exactly seven (one week of) years? When he still adds, *And in the midst of the week*, (*and in half a week*,) *he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate;* was this written after the event? Or can it with any reason be ascribed to chance, that from Vespasian's march into Judea in the spring *ann. Dom.* 67, to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus in the autumn *ann. Dom.* 70, should be half a septenary of years, or three years and a half?"[1]

That the time at which the promised Messiah was to appear is clearly defined in these prophecies; that the expectation of the coming of a great king or deliverer, was then prevalent, not only among the Jews, but among all the eastern nations, in consequence of these prophecies; that it afterwards excited that people to revolt, and proved the cause of their greater destruction,—the impartial and unsuspected evidence of heathen authors is combined with the reluctant and ample testimony of the Jews themselves, to attest.

Tacitus, Suetonius, Josephus, and Philo agree in testifying the antiquity of the prophecies, and their acknowledged reference to that period.[2] Even the Jews,

[1] Clarke's Works, fol. edit. vol. ii. p. 721.

[2] "Pluribus persuasio inerat, *antiquis* sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique *Judæa* rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum et Titum prædixerant. Sed vulgus, (Judæorum,) more humanæ cupidinis, *sibi tantam* fatorum magnitudinem interpretati, ne adversis quidem ad vera

t this day, own that the time when their Messiah ought to have appeared, according to their prophecies, is long since passed, and they attribute the delay of his coming to the sinfulness of their nation. And thus, from the distinct prophecies themselves, from the testimony of profane historians, and from the concessions of the Jews, every requisite proof is afforded that Christ appeared when all the concurring circumstances of the time denoted the prophesied period of his advent.

The predictions contained in the Old Testament respecting both the family out of which the Messiah was to arise, and the place of his birth, are almost as circumstantial, and are equally applicable to Christ, as those which refer to the time of his appearance. He was to be an Israelite, of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, and of the town of Bethlehem. The two former of these particulars are implied in the promise made to Abraham—in the prediction of Moses—in the prophetic benediction of Jacob to Judah—and in the reason assigned for the superiority of that tribe, because out of it the chief ruler should arise. And the two last, that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David and a native of Bethlehem, are expressly affirmed. *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.*[1] That this prophecy refers to the deliverer of the human race, is evident from the whole of the succeeding chapter, which is descriptive of the kingdom of the Messiah, of the calling of the Gentiles, and of the restoration of Israel. The same fact is predicted in many passages of the prophecies;—"Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee.—I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn

mutabantur."—(Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. xiii.) "Percrebuerat *Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis,* ut *eo tempore* Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperio Romano, quantum postea eventu patuit, prædictum Judæi *ad se trahentes, rebellarunt.*" Suet. in Vesp. lib. viii. c. iv. Julius Marathus, quoted by Suetonius, lib. ii. c. xciv. Joseph. de Bello, lib. vi. c. xxxi. (al. c. 5, § 4.) Philo de Præm. et Pœn. pp. 923, 924. Clarke, &c. &c.

[1] Isaiah xi. 1.

unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.—This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."[1] The place of the birth of the Messiah is thus clearly foretold:—"Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth, unto me," or, as the Hebrew word implies,[2] shall he be born, "that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."[3]—That all these predictions were fulfilled in Jesus Christ; that he was of that country, tribe, and family, of the house and lineage of David, and born in Bethlehem,—we have the fullest evidence in the testimony of all the evangelists; in two distinct accounts of the genealogies, (by natural and legal succession,) which, according to the custom of the Jews, were carefully preserved; in the acquiescence of the enemies of Christ to the truth of the fact, against which there is not a single surmise in history; and in the appeal made by some of the earliest of the Christian writers to the records of the census, taken at the very time of our Saviour's birth by order of Cæsar.[4] Here, indeed, it is impossible not to be struck with the exact fulfilment of prophecies which are apparently contradictory and irreconcilable, and with the manner in which they were providentially accomplished. The spot of Christ's nativity was distant from the place of the abode of his parents, and the region in which he began his ministry was remote from the place of his birth; and another prophecy respecting him was in this manner verified:—"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,—by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in

[1] 2 Sam. vii. 16; Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.
[2] Gen. x. 14, xvii. 6; 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c.
[3] Micah v. 2.
[4] Justin Mart. Ap. i. p. 55, ed. Thirl. Tert. in Mar. iv. 19, p. 713 ed. Paris. Barrow.

Galilee of the nations—the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."[1] Thus, the time at which the predicted Messiah was to appear, the nation, the tribe, and the family from which he was to be descended—and the place of his birth—no populous city—but of itself an inconsiderable place, were all clearly foretold, and as clearly refer to Jesus Christ,—and all meet their completion in him.

But the facts of his life, and the features of his character, are also drawn with a precision that cannot be misunderstood. The obscurity, the meanness, and poverty of his external condition are thus represented; —"he shall grow up before the Lord as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. Thus saith the Lord, —to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship."[2] That such was the condition in which Christ appeared, the whole history of his life abundantly testifies. And the Jews, looking in the pride of their hearts for an earthly king, disregarded these prophecies concerning him, were deceived by their traditions, and found only a stone of stumbling, where, if they had searched their Scriptures aright, they would have discovered an evidence of the Messiah. "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not this the son of Mary? said they, and they were offended at him." His riding in humble triumph into Jerusalem; his being betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, and scourged, and buffeted, and spit upon; the piercing of his hands and of his feet; the last offered draught of vinegar and gall; the parting of his raiment, and casting lots upon his vesture; the manner of his death and of his burial, and his rising again without seeing corruption,[3]—were all expressly

[1] Isa. ix. 1, 2; Matt. iv. 16. [2] Isa. liii. 2, xlix. 7.
[3] Zech. ix. 9, xi. 12; Isa. l. 6; Ps. xxii. 16, lxix. 21, xxii. 18; Isa. liii. 9; Ps. xvi. 10.

predicted, and all these predictions were literally fulfilled. If all these prophecies admit of any application to the events of the life of any individual, it can only be to that of the author of Christianity. And what other religion can produce a single fact which was actually foretold of its founder?

Though the personal appearance or moral condition of the Messiah was represented by the Jewish prophets, such as to bespeak no grandeur, his personal character is described as of a higher order than that of the sons of men. "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.[1]—He hath done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips.[2] The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.[3] The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.[4] He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.[5] A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.[6] Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass.[7] He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.[8] He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.[9] I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.[10] The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."[11] How many

[1] Isa. xi. 5. [2] Isa. liii. 9. [3] Isa. xi. 2.
[4] Isa. l. 4. [5] Isa. xl. 2. [6] Isa. xlii. 3.
[7] Zech. ix. 9. [8] Isa. xlii. 2. [9] Isa. liii. 7.
[10] Isa. l. 6. [11] Isa. l. 5, 7.

virtues are thus represented in the prophecies, as characteristic of the Messiah; and how applicable are they all to Christ alone, and how clearly imbodied in his character! His wisdom and knowledge—his speaking as never man spake—the general meekness of his manner and mildness of his conversation—his perfect candour and unsullied purity—his righteousness—his kindness and compassion—his genuine humility—his peaceable disposition—his unrepining patience—his invincible courage—his more than heroic resolution, and more than human forbearance—his unfaltering trust in God, and complete resignation to his will, are all portrayed in the liveliest, the most affecting, and expressive terms; and among all who ever breathed the breath of life, they can be applied to Christ alone.[1]

Mahomet pretended to receive a divine warrant to sanction his past impurities, and to license his future crimes. How different is the appeal of Jesus to earth and to heaven: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.—Search the Scriptures, for these are they which testify of me." They did testify of the coming of a Messiah, and of the superhuman excellence of his moral character. And if the life of Jesus was wonderful and unparalleled of itself, how miraculous does it appear, when all his actions develope the prophetic character of the promised Saviour! The internal evidences are here combined at once; and while the life of Christ proved that he was a righteous person, it proved also, as testified of by the prophets, that he was the Son of God.

In describing the blessings of the reign of the Messiah, the prophet Isaiah foretold the greatness and the benignity of his miracles:—"The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."[2] The history of Jesus shows how such acts of mercy formed the frequent exercise of his power·

[1] See Barrow on the Creed, p. 19.
[2] Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

at his word the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, and the dumb spake.[1]

The death of Christ was as unparalleled as his life: and the prophecies are as minutely descriptive of his sufferings as of his virtues. Not only did the paschal lamb, which was to be killed every year in all the families of Israel—which was to be taken out of the flock, to be without blemish—to be eaten with bitter herbs—to have its blood sprinkled, and to be kept whole that not a bone of it should be broken; not only did the offering up of Isaac, and the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, by looking upon which the people were healed,—and many ritual observances of the Jews,—prefigure the manner of Christ's death, and the sacrifice which was to be made for sin; but many express declarations abound in the prophecies, that Christ was indeed to suffer. Exclusive of the repeated declarations in the Psalms,[2] of afflictions which apply literally to him, and are interwoven with allusions to the Messiah's kingdom, the prophet Daniel,[3] in limiting the time of his coming, directly affirms that the Messiah was to be cut off; and in the same manifest allusion, Zechariah uses these emphatic words: "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him."[4]

But Isaiah, who describes with eloquence worthy of a prophet, the glories of the kingdom that was to come, characterizes, with the accuracy of an historian, the humiliation, the trials, and the agonies which were to precede the triumphs of the Redeemer of a world; and the history of Christ forms, to the very letter, the com-

[1] Matt. ix. 33, xi. 5.

[2] Ps. ii., xxii. 1, 6, 7, 16, 18, xxxv. 7, 11, 12, lxix. 20, 21, cix. 2, 3, 5, 25, cxviii. 12.

[3] Dan. ix. 26.

[4] Zech. xiii. 7, xii. 10.

mentary and the completion of his every prediction. In a single passage,[1]—the connection of which is uninterrupted, its antiquity indisputable, and its application obvious,—the sufferings of the servant of God, (who, under the same denomination, is previously described as he who was to be the light of the Gentiles, the salvation of God to the ends of the earth, and the elect of God, in whom his soul delighted,[2]) are so minutely foretold, that no illustration is requisite to show that they testify of Jesus. Of the multitude of parallel passages in the New Testament, a few of the most obvious may be here subjoined to the prophecy.

He is despised and rejected of men. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not; he had not where to lay his head; they derided him." *A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.* Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus; he mourned over Jerusalem; he felt the ingratitude and the cruelty of men; he bore the contradiction of sinners against himself: and these are expressions of sorrow which were peculiarly his own, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; but for this end came I into the world. My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" *We hid, as it were, our faces from him, he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* "All his disciples forsook him and fled. Not this man, but Barabbas: now Barabbas was a robber. The soldiers mocked him, and bowed the knee before him in derision." The catalogue of his sufferings is continued in the words of the prophecy: *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded, he was oppressed, he was afflicted, he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. He was taken away by distress and by judgment.* And to this general description is united the detail of minuter incidents, which fixes the fact of their application to Jesus. *He was cut off out of the land of the living.* He was crucified in the flower of his age. *He made his grave* (or his grave was ap-

[1] Isa. lii. 13—15, and chap. iii.
[2] Isa. xlii. 1, xlix. 6.

pointed) *with the wicked; and with the rich in his death.* His grave was doubtless appointed with the wicked, or the two thieves with whom he was crucified, but Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, went and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb. *He was numbered among the transgressors.* Barabbas was preferred before him. He was crucified between two thieves; and the Jews said unto Pilate, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." *His visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.* Without any direct allusion made to it, but in literal fulfilment of the prophecy—the bloody sweat, the traces of the crown of thorns, his having been spitted on, and smitten on the head, disfigured his face;—while the scourge, the nails in his hands and in his feet, and the spear that pierced his side, marred the form of Jesus more than that of the sons of men.

That this circumstantial and continuous description of the Messiah's sufferings might not admit of any ambiguity, the dignity of his person, the incredulity of the Jews, the innocence of the sufferer, the cause of his sufferings, and his consequent exaltation, are all particularly marked, and are equally applicable to the doctrine of the gospel. *He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up as a tender plant*, &c. The mean external condition of Christ is here assigned as the reason of the unbelief of the Jews, and it was the very reason which they themselves assigned. The prediction points out the procuring cause of his sufferings. *He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.* "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* "His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are

healed." *All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* "All flesh have sinned, ye were as sheep going astray, but ye are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." *He hath done no violence; neither was there any deceit in his mouth: Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.* "God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin."

The whole of this prophecy thus refers to the Messiah It describes both his debasement and his dignity—his rejection by the Jews—his humility, his affliction, and his agony—his magnanimity and his charity—how his words were disbelieved—how his state was lowly—how his sorrow was severe—how he opened not his mouth but to make intercession for the transgressors. In diametrical opposition to every dispensation of Providence which is registered in the records of the Jews, it represents spotless innocence suffering by the appointment of Heaven, death as the issue of perfect obedience, his righteous servant as forsaken of God, and one who was perfectly immaculate, bearing the chastisement of many guilty,—sprinkling many nations from their iniquity, by virtue of his sacrifice,—justifying many by his knowledge, and dividing a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul in death. This prophecy, therefore, simply as a prediction prior to the event, renders the very unbelief of the Jews an evidence against them, converts the scandal of the cross into an argument in favour of Christianity, and presents us with an epitome of the truth, a miniature of the gospel in some of its most striking features. The simple exposition of it sufficed at once for the conversion of the eunuch of Ethiopia; and, without the aid of an apostle, it can boast in more modern times of a nobler trophy of its truth, in a victory which it was mainly instrumental in obtaining and securing, over the strongly-riveted prejudices and long-tried infidelity of a man of genius and of rank, who was one of the most abandoned, insidious, and successful of

the advocates of impurity, and of the enemies of the Christian faith.[1]

Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, according to the Scriptures; and thus the apostle testifies: "Those things which God had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

That the Jews still retain these prophecies, and are the means of preserving them, and communicating them throughout the world, while they bear so strongly against themselves, and testify so clearly of a Saviour that was first to suffer, and then to be exalted,—are facts as indubitable as they are unaccountable, and give a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, than which it is difficult to conceive any stronger. The prophecies, as we have seen by a simple enumeration of a few of them that testify of the sufferings of the Messiah, need no forced interpretation, but apply in the plainest, simplest, and most literal manner, to the history of the sufferings and of the death of Christ. In the testimony of the Jews to the existence of these prophecies long prior to the Christian era; in their remaining unaltered to this hour; in the accounts given by the evangelists, of the life and death of Christ; in the testimony of heathen authors[2] which has been frequently quoted, but never refuted; and in the arguments of the first opposers of Christianity, from the mean condition of its author, and the manner of his death; we have now greater evidence of the fulfilment of all these prophecies, than could have been conceived possible at so great a distance of time.

But the prophecies farther present us with the character of the gospel as well as of its author, and with a description of the extent of his kingdom as well as of his sufferings. It was prophesied that the Messiah was to reveal the will of God to man, and establish a new

[1] Burnet's Life of the Earl of Rochester, pp. 70, 71.

[2] "Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat."—(Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. xliv.)

and perfect religion:—"I will raise them up a prophet, —and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse;—he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity. I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant; and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them: one king shall be king to them all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols. They shall have one shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgments, and my servant David shall be their prince forever. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant; —and this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After these days, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people: and

they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."[1] A future and perfect revelation of the divine will is thus explicitly foretold. That these promised blessings were to extend beyond the confines of Judea, is expressly and frequently predicted:—"It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.[2]

While many of the prophecies which are descriptive of the glories of the reign of the Messiah, refer to its universal extension, and to the final restoration of the Jews, they detail and define, at the same time, the nature and the blessings of the gospel; and no better description or definition could now be given of the doctrine of Christ, and of the conditions which he hath proposed for the acceptance of man, than those very prophecies which were delivered many hundreds of years before he appeared in the world. The gospel, as the name itself signifies, denotes glad tidings. Christ himself invited those who were weary and heavy laden to come unto him, that they might find rest unto their souls. He was the messenger of peace. He came, as he professed, to offer a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and to reveal the will of God to man. He published the gospel of the grace of God. His word is still that of reconciliation, his law that of love; and all the duty he has prescribed tends to qualify man for spiritual and eternal felicity, for this is the sum and the object of it all. What more could have been given, and what less could have been required? In similar terms do the prophecies of old describe the new law that was to be

[1] Deut. xviii. 18, 19; Isa. ix. 6, 7, xi. 1, 3, 4, xlii. 6, lv. 3, 4; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 25, xxxvii. 22—26; Jer. xxxi. 31, 33, 34.

[2] Isa. xlix. 6, lvi. 6—8.

revealed, and the advent of the Saviour that was to come :—" Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold, thy king cometh unto thee. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation.[1] The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."[2] Having read these words out of the law, in the synagogue, Jesus said, " This day is this Scripture fulfilled." He was a teacher of righteousness and of peace, and in him alone it could have been fulfilled. The same character of joy, indicative of the kingdom of the Messiah, is also given by different prophets. He was to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity ; to sprinkle clean water upon the people of God, to sprinkle many nations, to save them from their uncleanness, and to open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. " Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him. I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sins no more. The Messiah was to be anointed to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.[3] And in the gospel of peace these promised blessings are realized. We now see what many prophets and wise men did desire in vain to see. The Christian religion has indeed been sadly perverted and corrupted, and its corruptions are the subjects of prophecy. Bigotry has often tarnished and obscured all its benignity. Its lovely form has been shrouded in a mask of superstition, of tyranny, and of murder. But the religion of Jesus, pure from the lips of its author and the pen of his apostles, is

[1] Isa. lii. 7. [2] Isa. lxi. 1.
[3] Dan. ix. 24 ; Isa. lv. 7 ; Jer. xxxi. 34 ; Isa. lxi. 1—3.

calculated to diffuse universal happiness; tends effectually to promote the moral culture and the civilization of humanity; ameliorates the condition and perfects the nature of man. It is a doctrine of righteousness, a perfect rule of duty: it abolishes idolatry, and teaches all to worship God only: it is full of promises to all who obey it: it reveals the method of reconciliation for iniquity, and imparts the means to obtain it: it is good tidings to the meek: it binds up the broken-hearted, and presents to us the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, or the most perfect system of consolation, under all the evils of life, that can be conceived by man. For the confirmation of all these prophecies concerning it, we stand not in need of Jewish testimony, or that of the primitive Christians, or of any testimony whatever. It is a matter of experience and of fact. The doctrine of the gospel is in complete accordance with the predictions respecting it. When we compare it with any impure, degrading, vicious, and cruel system of religion that existed in the world when these prophecies were delivered, its superiority must be apparent, and its unrivalled excellence must be acknowledged. Deities were then worshipped whose vices disgraced human nature; and even impiety could not institute a comparison between them and the God of Christians. Idolatry was universally prevalent, and men knew not a higher honour than the humiliation of bowing down in adoration to stocks and stones, and sometimes even to the beasts. Sacrifices were everywhere offered up, and human victims often bled, when the doctrine of reconciliation for iniquity was unknown. And we have only to look beyond the boundaries of Christianity,—to Ashantee, or to India, or to China,—to behold the most revolting of spectacles in the religious rites and practices of man. Regarding the superiority of the Christian religion only as a subject of prophecy, the assent can hardly be withheld, that the prophecies concerning its excellence, and the blessings which it im-

parts, have been amply verified by the peace-speaking gospel of Jesus.

But, in ascertaining the accomplishment of ancient predictions, in evidence of the truth, the unbeliever is not solicited to relinquish one iota of his skepticism in any matter that can possibly admit of a reasonable doubt. For there are many prophecies, of the truth of which every Christian is a witness, and to the fulfilment of which the testimony even of infidels must be borne. That the gospel emanated from Jerusalem; that it was rejected by a great proportion of the Jews; that it was opposed at first by human power; that idolatry has been overthrown before it; that kings have become subject to it and supported it; that it has already continued for many ages, and that it has been propagated throughout many countries, are facts clearly foretold and literally fulfilled. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he shall judge among the nations.[1] He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed."[2] In like manner, Christ frequently foretold the persecution that awaited his followers, and the final success of the gospel, in defiance of all opposition.[3] "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish; —from all your idols will I cleanse you;—I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered.[4] To a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship. The gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.[5] The gentiles

[1] Isa. ii. 3, 4; Micah iv. 2. [2] Isa. viii. 14; Ps. ii. 2.
[3] Matt. x. 17, xvi. 18, xxiv. 14, xxviii. 19.
[4] Isa. ii. 17, 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Zech. xiii. 2.
[5] Isa. xlix. 7, 23, lx. 3.

shall see thy righteousness:—a people that knew me not shall be called after my name. In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the gentiles seek. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not; and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee."[1]

At the time the prophecies were delivered, there was not a vestige in the world of that spiritual kingdom and pure religion which they unequivocally represent as extending in succeeding ages, not only throughout the narrow bounds of the land of Judea, and those countries which alone the prophets knew, but over the gentile nations also, even to the uttermost ends of the earth. None are now ignorant of the facts, that a system of religion which inculcates piety, and purity, and love,—which releases man from every burdensome rite and every barbarous institution, and proffers the greatest of blessings,—arose from the land of Judea, from among a people who are proverbially the most selfish and worldly minded of any nation upon earth;—that, though persecuted at first, and rejected by the Jews, it has spread throughout many nations, and extended to those who were far distant from the scene of its origin; and that it freely invites all to partake of its privileges, and makes no distinction between barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. A Latin poet, who lived at the commencement of the Christian era, speaks of the barbarous Britons as almost divided from the whole world; and yet, although far more distant from the land of Judea than from Rome, the law which hath come out from Jerusalem hath taken, by its influence, the name of barbarous from Britain: and in "our distant isle of the gentiles" are the prophecies fulfilled, that the kingdom of the Messiah, or knowledge of the gospel, would extend to the uttermost part of the earth. And in the present day, we can look from one distant isle of the gentiles to another,—from the northern to the southern ocean, or

[1] Isa. lxii. 2, xi. 10, lv. 3, 5.

from one extremity of the globe to another,—and behold the extinction of idolatry, and the abolition of every barbarous and cruel rite, by the humanizing influence of the gospel. But it was at a time when no divine light dawned upon the world, save obscurely on the land of Judea alone; when all the surrounding nations, in respect to religious knowledge, were involved in thick darkness, gross superstition, and blind idolatry; when men made unto themselves gods of corruptible things; when those mortals were deified, after their death, who had been subject to the greatest vices, and who had been the oppressors of their fellow-men; when the most shocking rites were practised as acts of religion; when the most enlightened among the nations of the earth erected an altar to the "unknown God," and set no limit to the number of their deities; when one of the greatest of the heathen philosophers, and the best of their moralists, despairing of the clear discovery of the truth by human means, could merely express a wish for a divine revelation, as the only safe and certain guide;[1] when slaves were far more numerous than freemen, even where liberty prevailed the most; and when there was no earthly hope of redemption from temporal bondage or spiritual slavery;—even at such a time the voice of prophecy was uplifted in the land of Judea, and it spoke of a brighter day that was to dawn upon the world. It was indeed a light shining in a dark place. And from whence could that light have emanated but from heaven? A Messiah was promised, a Prince of peace was to appear, a stone was to be cut without hands, that should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. And the spiritual reign of a Saviour is foretold in terms that define its duration and extent, as well as describe its nature:—"I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.—His name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. He shall have dominion from sea to sea; and

[1] Plato in Phædone et in Alcibiade ii.

from the river unto the ends of the earth. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall wor ship before thee.[1] I will give thee for a light to the gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.[2] The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.[3] He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.[4] I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.[5] "It shall come to pass, in the last days," say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words, "that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.[6] In the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.[7] The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee; the forces of the gentiles shall come unto thee.[8] Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife (more gentiles than Jews.) Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the gentiles: for thy Maker is

[1] Num. xxiv. 17; Ps. lxxii. 17, 8, ii. 8, xxii. 27.
[2] Isa. xlix. 6, xl. 5.
[3] Isa. lii. 10, xlii. 4.
[4] Isa. xxv. 7.
[5] Isa. lxv. 1.
[6] Isa. ii. 2; Micah iv. 1.
[7] Hosea i. 10.
[8] Isa. lx. 5.

thine husband: the Lord of hosts is his name; the God of the whole earth shall he be called.[1] The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.[2]

These prophecies all refer to the extent of the Messiah's kingdom; and clear and copious though they be, they form but a small number of the predictions of the same auspicious import:—and we have not merely to consider what part of them may yet remain to be fulfilled, but how much has already been accomplished, of which no surmise could have been formed, and of which all the wisdom of short-sighted mortals could not have warranted a thought. All of them were delivered many ages before the existence of that religion whose progress they minutely describe; and, when we compare the present state of any country where the gospel is professed in its purity, with its state at that period when the Sun of righteousness began to rise upon it, we see light pervading the regions of darkness, and ignorance and barbarism yielding to knowledge and moral cultivation. In opposition to all human probability, and to human wisdom and power, the gospel of Jesus, propagated at first by a few fishermen of Galilee, has razed every heathen temple from its foundation, has overthrown before it every impure altar, has displaced, from every palace and every cottage which it has reached, the worship of every false god; the whole civilized world acknowledges its authority; it has prevailed from the first to the last in defiance of persecution, of opposition the most powerful and violent, of the direct attacks of avowed, and the insidious designs of disguised enemies;—and combating, as it ever has been combating, with all the evil passions of men that impel them to resist or pervert it, the lapse of eighteen centuries confirms every ancient prediction, and verifies, to this hour, the declaration of its author,—"the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How is it possible that it could have been conceived that such a religion would have

[1] Isa. liv. 1—3, 5. [2] Isa. xxxv. 1

been characterized in all its parts—would have been instituted—opposed—established—propagated throughout the world—embraced by so many nations—protected at last by princes and kings—and received as the rule of faith and the will of God? How could all these things, and many more respecting it, have been foretold, as they unquestionably were, many centuries before the author of Christianity appeared, if these prophecies be not an attestation from on high that every prediction and its completion is the work of God and not of man? What uninspired mortal could have described the nature, the effect, and the progress of the Christian religion, when none could have entertained an idea of its existence? for paganism consisted in external rites and cruel sacrifices, and in pretended mysteries. Its toleration, indeed, has been commended, and not undeservedly; for in religion it tolerated whatever was absurd and impious, in morals it tolerated all that was impure, and almost all that was vicious. But the Jewish prophets, when the world was in darkness, and could supply no light to lead them to such knowledge, predicted the rise of a religion which could boast of no *such* toleration, but which was to reveal the will and inculcate the worship of the one living and true God; which was to consist in moral obedience, to enjoin reformation of life and purity of heart, to abolish all sacrifice by revealing a better means of reconciliation for iniquity, to be understood by all from the simplicity of its precepts, and to tolerate no manner of evil; a religion in every respect the reverse of paganism, and of which they could not have been furnished with any semblance upon earth. They saw nothing among the surrounding nations but the worship of a multiplicity of deities and of idols: if they had traversed the whole world, they would have witnessed only the same spiritual degradation, and yet they predicted the final abolition and extinction both of polytheism and of idolatry. The Jewish dispensation was local, and Jews prophesied of a religion beginning from Jerusalem, which was to extend to

the uttermost parts of the earth. So utterly unlikely and incredible were the prophecies either to have been foretold by human wisdom, or to have been fulfilled by human power; and when both these wonders are united, they convey an assurance of the truth. As a matter of history, the progress of Christianity is at least astonishing; as the fulfilment of many prophecies, it is evidently miraculous.[1]

The prophesied success and extension of the gospel is not less obvious in the New Testament than in the Old. A single instance may suffice:—"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." These are the words of a banished man, secluded in a small island from which he could not remove; a believer in a new religion everywhere spoken against and persecuted. They were uttered at a time when their truth could not possibly have been realized to the degree which it actually is at present, even if all human power had been combined for extending, instead of extinguishing the gospel. The diffusion of knowledge was then extremely difficult; the art of printing was then unknown; and many countries which the gospel has now reached were then undiscovered. And, multiplied as books now are, more than at any former period of the history of man,—extensive as the range of commerce is, beyond what Tyre, or Carthage, or Rome could have ever boasted,—the dissemination of the Scriptures surpasses both the one and the other: they

[1] Were it even to be conceded, as it never will in reason be, that the causes assigned by Gibbon for the rapid extension of Christianity were *adequate* and true, one difficulty, great as it is, would only be removed for the substitution of a greater. For what human ingenuity, though gifted with the utmost reach of discrimination, can ever attempt the solution of the question, how were all these occult causes, (for hidden they must then have been,) which the genius of Gibbon first discovered, foreseen, their combination known, and all their wonderful effects distinctly described for many centuries prior to their existence, or to the commencement of the period of their alleged operation?

have penetrated regions unknown to any work of human genius, and untouched even by the ardour of commercial speculation; and, with the prescription of more than seventeen centuries in its favour, the prophecy of the poor prisoner of Patmos is now exemplified, and thus proved to be more than a mortal vision, in the unexampled communication of the everlasting gospel unto them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Christianity is professed over Europe and America. Christians are settled throughout every part of the earth. The gospel is now translated into more than one hundred and fifty languages and dialects, which are prevalent in countries from the one extremity of the world to the other: and what other book, since the creation, has ever been read or known in a tenth part of the number? Whatever may be the secondary causes by which these events have been accomplished, or whatever may be the opinion of men respecting them, the predictions which they amply verify must have originated by inspiration from him who is the first Great Cause. What divine warrant, equal to this alone, can all the speculations of infidelity supply, or can any freethinker produce, for disbelieving the gospel?

It is apparent, on a general view of the prophecies which refer to Christ and to the Christian religion, that they include predictions relative to many of the doctrines of the gospel which are subjects of pure revelation, or which reason of itself could never have discovered; and these very doctrines, to which the self-sufficiency of human wisdom is often averse to yield assent, are thus to be numbered, in this respect, among the criterions of the truth of divine revelation; for if these doctrines had not been contained in Scripture, the prophecies respecting them could not have been fulfilled. And the more wonderful they appear, they were by so much the more unlikely or inconceivable to have been foretold by man, and to have been afterwards imbodied in a system of religion.

It is also evident that there are many prophecies applicable to Jesus, to which no allusion is made in the history of his life. The minds of his disciples were long impressed with the prejudices, arising from the lowliness of his mortal state, which were prevalent among the Jews; and they viewed the prophecies through the mist of those traditions which had magnified the earthly power to which alone they looked, and obscured the divine nature of the expected reign of the Messiah. It was only after the resurrection of Christ, as the Scripture informs us, that their understandings were opened to know the prophecies. But while the accomplishment of many of these predictions is thus unnoticed in the New Testament, the fulfilment of each and all of them is written, as with a pen of iron, in the life and doctrine and death of Jesus;—and the undesigned and unsuspicious proof, thus indirectly but amply given, is now stronger than if an appeal had been made to the prophecies in every instance;—and, freed from the prejudices of the Jews, we may now combine and compare all the antecedent prophecies respecting the Messiah with the narrative of the New Testament, and with the nature and history of Christianity; and having seen how the former is a transcript of the latter, we may draw the legitimate conclusion, that the spirit of prophecy is indeed the testimony of Jesus.

And may it not, on a review of the whole, be warrantably asserted, that the time and place of the birth of Christ, the tribe and the family from which he was descended, the manner of his life, his character, his miracles, his sufferings and his death; the nature of his doctrine, and the fate of his religion; that it was to proceed from Jerusalem, that the Jews would reject it, that it would be opposed and persecuted at first, that it would be extended to the gentiles, that idolatry would give way before it, that kings would submit to its authority, and that it would be spread throughout many nations, even to the most distant parts of the earth,—were all of them subjects of ancient prophecy?

Why, then, were so many prophecies delivered? Why, from the calling of Abraham to the present time, have the Jews been separated, as a peculiar people, from all the nations of the earth? Why, from the age of Moses to that of Malachi, during the space of one thousand years, did a succession of prophets arise, all testifying of a Saviour that was to come? Why was the book of prophecy sealed for nearly four hundred years before the coming of Christ? Why is there still, to this day, undisputed if not miraculous evidence of the antiquity of all these prophecies, by their being sacredly preserved in every age, in the custody and guardianship of the enemies of Christianity? Why was such a multiplicity of facts predicted that are applicable to Christ and to him alone? Why, but that all this mighty preparation might usher in the gospel of righteousness; and that, like all the works of the Almighty, his word through Jesus Christ might never be left without a witness of his wisdom and his power? And if the prophecies which testify of the gospel and its Author display, from the slight glance which has here been given of them, any traces of the finger of God, how strong must be the conviction which a full view of them imparts to the minds of those who diligently search the Scriptures, and see how clearly they testify of Christ!

CHAPTER III.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

The commonwealth of Israel, from its establishment to its dissolution, subsisted for more than fifteen hundred years. In delivering their law, Moses assumed more than the authority of a human legislator, and asserted that he was invested with a divine commission; and in enjoining obedience to it, after having conducted them to the borders of Canaan, he promises many blessings to accompany their compliance with the law, and denounces grievous judgments that would overtake them for the breach of it. The history of the Jews in each succeeding age, attests the truth of the last prophetic warning of the first of their rulers; but too lengthened a detail would be requisite for its elucidation. Happily, it contains predictions, applicable to more recent events, which admit not of any ambiguous interpretation, and refer to historical facts that admit no cavil. He who founded their government, foretold, notwithstanding the intervention of so many ages, the manner of its overthrow. While they were wandering in the wilderness, without a city and without a home, he threatened them with the destruction of their cities, and the devastation of their country. While they viewed, for the first time, the land of Palestine, and when, victorious and triumphant, they were about to possess it, he represented the scene of desolation that it would exhibit to their vanquished and enslaved posterity, on their last departure from it. Ere they themselves had entered it as enemies, he describes those enemies by whom their descendants were to be subjugated and dispossessed, though they were to arise from a very distant region, and although they did not appear till after a millenary and a half of

years: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee; and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land."[1] Each particular of this prophecy, though it be only introductory to others, has met its full completion. The remote situation of the Romans, the rapidity of their march, the very emblem of their arms, their unknown language and warlike appearance, the indiscriminate cruelty and unsparing pillage which they exercised towards the persons and the property of the Jews, could scarcely have been represented in more descriptive terms.[2] Vespasian, Adrian, and Julius Severus removed with part of their armies from Britain to Palestine, the extreme points of the Roman world. The eagle was the standard of their armies, and the utmost activity and expedition were displayed in the reduction of Judea. They were a nation of fierce countenance, a race distinct from the effeminate Asiatic troops. At Gadara and Gamala, throughout many parts of the Roman empire, and, in repeated instances, at Jerusalem itself, the slaughter of the Jews was indiscriminate, without distinction of age or sex. The inhabitants were enslaved and banished, all their possessions confiscated, and the kingdom of Israel, humbled at first into a province of the Roman empire, became at last the private property of the emperor. Throughout all the land of Judea every city was besieged and taken; and their high and fenced walls were razed from the foundation. But the prophet

[1] Deut. xxvii. 49—52.

[2] See Jackson, Poole, Patrick, Whiston, Bishop Newton, &c.

particularizes incidents the most shocking to humanity, which mark the utmost possible extremity of want and wretchedness; the last act to which famine could prompt despair, and the last subject of a prediction that could have been uttered by man: "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters,—in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee; so that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eyes shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave; so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat, because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates."[1] No commentator, nor careful reader of Scripture and of Jewish history, could fail to observe the repeated instances of the fulfilment of this striking and awful prediction. When Samaria, then the capital of Israel, was besieged by all the hosts of the king of Syria, an ass's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver.[2] When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And Josephus, in his history of the Jewish war, relates the direful calamities of the Jews in their last siege, before they ceased to have a city. The famine was too powerful for all other passions, for what was otherwise reverenced was in this case despised. Children snatched the food out of the very mouths of their

[1] Deut. xxviii. 53—57. [2] 2 Kings vi. 25.

fathers; and even mothers, overcoming the tenderest feelings of nature, took from their perishing infants the last morsels that could sustain their lives.—In every house where there was the least shadow of food, a contest arose; and the nearest relatives struggled with each other for the miserable means of subsistence.[1] He adds a most revolting detail.[2] While, in all these cases, the eye of man was thus evil towards his brother, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith their enemies distressed them; the unparalleled inhuman compact between the two women of Samaria; the bitter lamentation of Jeremiah over the miseries of the siege which he witnessed, "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children, they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people;" and the harrowing recital, by Josephus, of the noble lady killing, with her own hands, and eating secretly, her own suckling, (the discovery of which struck even the whole suffering city with horror,) which are all recorded as facts, without the least allusion to the prediction,—too faithfully realize, to the very letter, the dread denunciations of the prophet. When any well-authenticated facts, of so singular and appalling a nature, were predicted for ages, they could not possibly have been revealed but by inspiration from that Omniscience which alone can foresee the termination of the iniquities of nations.

Moses, and the other prophets, foretold also that the Jews would be left few in number, that they would be slain before their enemies, that the pride of their power would be broken, that their cities would be laid waste, that they would be destroyed and brought to naught, plucked from off the land, sold for slaves, and that none would buy them; that their high places were to be desolate, and their bones to be scattered around their altars; that Jerusalem was to be encamped round about,

[1] Joseph. Hist. lib. v. c. x. § 3.—lib. vi. c. iii. § 3. Quoted by Eusebius, A. D. 315.—Ecc. Hist. lib. iii. c. vi. p. 95, 97. Patrick, &c.
[2] Joseph. ibid. vi c. iii. § 4.

to be besieged with a mount, to have forts raised against it, to be ploughed over as a field, and to become heaps; that the end was to come upon it; and that the Lord would judge them according to their ways, and recompense them for all their abominations; the sword without, and the pestilence and the famine within: "he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him."[1]

These predictions, which are recorded in the Pentateuch, and in the subsequent prophecies, accord with the minute prophetic narrative which Jesus gave of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Any adequate delineation of it alone would far surpass the limits of this treatise. But the subject has been fully and frequently illustrated, and the prediction harmonizes so completely with the unimpeachable testimony of impartial historians, that it is merely necessary, for the elucidation of its truth, to compare the prophetic description with the historical fact.[2]

[1] Lev. xxvi. 30, &c.; Deut. xxviii. 62, &c.; Isa. xxiv. 3; Ezek. vi. 5; Micah iii. 12; Jer. xxvi. 18; Ezek. vii. 7—9, 15.

[2] "The particular parts of the whole discourse have been admirably illustrated by *many* learned commentators. Christian writers have *always*, with great reason, represented Josephus's History of the Jewish War as the best commentary on this chapter, (Matt. xxiv.;) and *many* have justly remarked it, as a wonderful instance of the care of Providence for the Christian church, that he, an eyewitness, and in these things of so great credit, should (especially in such an extraordinary manner) be preserved, to transmit to us a collection of important facts, which *so exactly* illustrate this noble prophecy in almost every circumstance."—Doddridge's Family Expositor, vol. ii. p. 373; second edition, 1745. No author, perhaps, has been more frequently quoted on any subject than Josephus on this; his History of the Wars of the Romans with the Jews having been for many ages the common property of the Christian church, in illustration of the prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. These prophecies were quoted and illustrated by Eusebius above 1500 years ago, lib. iv. c. v.—ix. p. 92—102, edit. Cantab. 1720. After giving a tragic summary, from the 5th and 6th books of Josephus's history of the miseries sustained from famine during the siege, he emphatically and justly states, that if any one compare the words of Christ with Josephus's narrative of the whole war,

Besides frequent allusions in his discourses and parables,[1] the predictions of Christ, concerning Jerusalem, are recorded at length by three of the evangelists. They are omitted by the apostle John, in whose writings alone, from the age to which he lived, their insertion could have been suspicious. They were delivered to the disciples of Christ in answer to those direct questions which they put, in their surprise and alarm, at his declaration of the fate of the temple, "When shall these things be? What shall be the sign of them, and of the end of the world?" The reply embraces all the subjects of the query, and is equally circumstantial and distinct. The death of Christ happened thirty-seven years previous to the destruction of Jerusalem. By the unanimous testimony of antiquity, the three gospels were published, and at least two of the evangelists were dead, several years before that event. Copies of the gospels were disseminated so extensively and rapidly, that any deceit must have been instantaneously detected by the powerful, and numerous, and watchful enemies of the cross. And the evidence of the prior publicity of the gospels was so strong, that it remained unchallenged by Julian, by Porphyry, or by Celsus. The authenticity of the prophecy thus rests on sure grounds, and the facts in which it received its accomplishment are incontestable. Jose-

he cannot but admire the wonderful prescience and prophecy of Christ, and confess that they were truly divine and exceedingly wonderful. So *fully and frequently has the subject been illustrated*, as stated *in every edition* of this treatise, that any "studious Christian," at all versed in the subject, could be at no loss to form, from the works of various writers in past ages, a volume of coincident illustrations of the same predictions from the same authorities. It may here suffice to mention the names of Eusebius, Grotius, Tillemont, Jackson, Poole, Patrick, Tillotson, Whitby, Abbadie, Whiston, Doddridge, Pearce, Bishop Newton, Lardner, &c., the last of whom, in a single treatise, has 250 references to Josephus alone. Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Eusebius, are quoted or referred to in a single paragraph by Doddridge, as well as by many preceding writers; and in this brief and most imperfect summary, these authorities were consulted from the first.

[1] Matt. xxi. 18, 19, 33—44, xxii. 1—7, xxv. 14—30; Mark xi. 12—20, &c.; Luke xiii. 6—9, xiv. 16—24, xx. 9—18, xxiii. 27—31.

phus was one of the most distinguished generals in the commencement of the Jewish war; he was an eye-witness of the facts which he records; he appeals to Vespasian and to Titus for the truth of his history; it received the singular attestation of the subscription of the latter to its accuracy; it was published while the facts were recent and notorious; and the extreme carefulness with which he avoids the mention of the name of Christ, in the history of the Jewish war, is not less remarkable than the great precision with which he describes the events that verify his predictions. Not a few of the transactions are also related by Tacitus, Suetonius, Philostratus, and Dion Cassius.

The different prophecies of Christ respecting Jerusalem, may be condensed into a single view.

"And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him, for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And the time draws near; and ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: (or commotions:) these things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights; and great signs shall there be from heaven. All these things are the beginning of sorrows. But, before all these things, shall they lay their hands upon you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And many shall be offended. Ye shall be betrayed both by parents and

brethren, and kinsfolk and friends: and some of you shall they cause to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. And many false prophets will arise and will deceive many: and, because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. And the gospel must first be published among all nations, and then shall the end come. When ye, therefore, shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, and the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place, and where it ought not, then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let him which is in the midst of it depart out. Let him which is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein to take any thing out of his house. Neither let him that is in the field turn back again for to take up his garment, for these are the days of vengeance. But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations. There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled. This generation shall not pass away till all these things be done."[1]

"Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees; fill ye up the measure of your fathers. Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill, and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me hence-

[1] Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi.

forth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.[1]

"When he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."[2]

These prophecies, from the Old Testament and from the New, repel the charge of ambiguity. They are equally copious and clear. History attests the truth of each and all of them; and a recapitulation of them forms an enumeration of the facts. *False Christs appeared.* Simon Magus boasted that he was some great one. Dositheus, the Samaritan, pretended that he was the lawgiver prophesied of by Moses. Theudas, promising the performance of a miracle, persuaded a great multitude to follow him to Jordan, and deceived many.[3] The country was filled with impostors and deceivers, who induced the people to follow them into the wilderness;[4]—their credulity became the punishment of their previous skepticism, and, in one instance, the tumult was so great, that the soldiers took two hundred prisoners, and slew twice that number. *There were wars and rumours of wars; nation rose against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.* The Jews resisted the erection of the statue of Caligula in the temple; and such was the dread of Roman resentment, that the fields remained uncultivated. At Cæsarea, the Jews and Syrians contended for the mastery of the city. Twenty thousand of the former were put to death, and the rest were expelled. Every

[1] Matt. xxiii. 29, 32, 34, 36—39. [2] Luke xix. 41—44.
[3] Joseph. Ant. lib. xx. cap. v. § 1. Quoted by Grotius, Whitby, &c. &c.
[4] Joseph. Ant. lib. xx. cap. viii. quoted by Grotius, &c.

city in Syria was then divided into two armies, and multitudes were slaughtered.[1] Alexandria and Damascus presented a similar scene of bloodshed. About fifty thousand of the Jews fell in the former, and ten thousand in the latter.[2] The Jewish nation rebelled against the Romans; Italy was convulsed with contentions for the empire; and, as a proof of the troublous and warlike character of the period, within the brief space of two years, four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, suffered death. *There were famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.* In the reign of Claudius Cæsar there were different famines. They continued to be severe for several years throughout the land of Judea. Pestilence succeeded them. In the same reign there were earthquakes at Rome, at Apamea, and at Crete. In that of Nero there was an earthquake in Campania, and another in which Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown; and others are recorded to have happened in various places, before the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.[3] "The constitution of nature," says the Jewish historian,[4] "was confounded for the destruction of men, and one might easily conjecture that no common calamities were portended." *And there were fearful sights and signs from heaven.* Tacitus and Josephus agree in relating and in describing events so surprising and supernatural, that their narrative perfectly accords with the previous prediction.[5] And the fact cannot be disputed, that, whatever these sights were, the minds of men were impressed with the

[1] Joseph. Ant. Hist. lib. ii. cap. xviii. §§ 1, 2. Tillotson, Bishop Newton, &c.

[2] Ibid. lib. ii. c. xviii. §§ 7, 8, c. xx. § 2. Ibid.

[3] Suet. Vit. Claud. cap. xviii.; Tac. Ann. lib. xii. c. xliii., lib. xiv. c. xxvii.; Jos. lib. iv. c. iv. Grotius, Whitby, &c.

[4] Jos. Ibid. Whitby, Newton, Scott's Commentary.

[5] "Evenerant prodigia, quæ neque hostiis neque votis piare fas habet gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa. Visæ per cœlum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma, et subito nubium igne collucere templum. Expassæ repente delubri fores, et audita major humana vox, *excedere deos;* simul ingens motus excedentium." (Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. xiii.) Whitby, &c.

idea that they were indeed signs from heaven: and even this could never have been foreseen by man. There is surely something at least unaccountable in their prediction, and in their relation by historians, unprejudiced and unfriendly to the cause which their testimony supports. *The disciples of Jesus were persecuted, imprisoned, afflicted, and hated of all nations, for his name's sake, and many of them were put to death.* Peter, Simon, and Jude were crucified.[1] Paul was beheaded; Matthew, Thomas, James, Matthias, Mark, and Luke, were put to death in different countries, and in various manners. There was a war against the very name. They were accused of hatred to the human race. The prejudices and the interests of the supporters of paganism were everywhere against them; and, in one memorable instance, Nero, to screen himself from the guilt of being the incendiary of his capital, accused the innocent but hated Christians of that atrocious deed, and inflicted upon them the most excruciating tortures.[2] He made their sufferings a spectacle and a sport to the Romans. To compensate for his disappointment in not trampling on the ashes of Rome, as well as to cloak his iniquity, the monster (for the man and the monarch were both laid aside) gratified his savage lust of cruelty by the substitution of one feast for another; he selected the Christians for his victims, from the general odium under which they lay; and their very name became the warrant for that selection, and sufficed to sanction the infliction of unheard-of barbarities. *Many shall be offended and shall betray one another; and the love of many shall wax cold.* The apostle of the gentiles often complained of false brethren, that many turned away from him, and that he stood alone, forsaken by all, when he first appeared before Nero. And Tacitus testifies that very many were convicted, on the evidence of others who had previously been accused. *But the gospel was published throughout the world*, in defiance of all peril and

[1] Cave's Lives of the Apostles; Dupin.
[2] Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. xliv. Whitby, &c.

persecution. In the age of the apostles, epistles were addressed to Christians at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica, and in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. After Christ delivered this prophecy, he was in a little time forsaken by all his disciples, and put to death as a criminal. At their first assembly, they were a little flock, the number of the names together being about a hundred and twenty. And, unpromising as the prospect was, a few fishermen of Galilee, aided afterwards by a tent-maker of Tarsus, circumscribed not their labours, in the preaching of the gospel, by the boundaries of the Roman empire. Could the reception or the fate of Christ himself have warranted such a conclusion? Did ever any cause triumph by such means? or was there any cause opposed like his? And could any thing be more unlikely to have been clearly foreseen and positively affirmed? All these events preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, and then the end of that city was at hand. The signs of its approaching ruin are given as a warning to depart from it. *Jerusalem was encompassed with armies.* The Roman armies, with their idolatrous ensigns, which were an abomination to the Jews, surrounded it; but instead of being a signal for flight, this would naturally have implied the impossibility of escape, and the warning would have been in vain. Yet the words of Jesus did not deceive his disciples. Cestius Gallus, the Roman general, besieged Jerusalem; but immediately after, contrary to all human probability, an interval was given for escape. He suddenly and causelessly retreated, though some of the chief men of the city had offered to open to him the gates. Josephus acknowledges that the utmost consternation prevailed among the besieged, and that the city would infallibly have been taken.[1] And he attributes it to the just vengeance of God, that the city and the sanctuary were not then taken, and the war terminated at once. He relates also, how many of the most illustrious inhabitants departed from the city, as from

[1] Joseph. lib. ii. cap. xix. xx. Grotius, &c. &c.

a sinking vessel; and how, upon the approach of Vespasian afterwards, multitudes fled from Jericho into the mountainous country. Thither, and to the city of Pella, fled all the disciples of Jesus:[1] and, amidst all the succeeding calamities, *not a hair of their heads did perish.*

There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor shall ever be. There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. These are the days of vengeance. Such are some of the words of Jesus, relative to the destruction of Jerusalem; and all the previous prophecies regarding it were of the same sad import. The particulars of the siege are all related by Josephus, and form a detail of miseries that admit not of exaggeration; and which he repeatedly declares, in terms that entirely accord with the language of prophecy, are altogether unequalled in the history of the world. No general description can give a just idea of calamities the most terrible that ever nation suffered. The Jews had assembled in their city from all the surrounding country, to keep the feast of unleavened bread. It was crowded with inhabitants, when they were all imprisoned within its walls. The passover, which was commemorative of their first great deliverance, had collected them for their last signal destruction. Before any external enemy appeared, the fiercest dissensions prevailed; the blood of thousands was shed by their brethren; they destroyed and burned in their frenzy their common provisions for the siege; they were destitute of any regular government, and divided into three factions. On the extirpation of one of these, each of the others contended for the mastery. The most ferocious and frantic, the robbers or zealots, as they are indiscriminately called, prevailed at last. They entered the temple, under the pretence of offering sacrifices, and carried concealed weapons for the purpose of assassination. They slew the priests at the very altar; and their blood, instead of that of the vic-

[1] Epiphanius in Hæres. Nazar. cap. vii.; Eusebii Ec. Hist. lib. iii. cap. v. Whitby, Doddridge, &c.

tims for sacrifice, flowed around it. They afterwards rejected all terms of peace with the enemy; none were suffered to escape from the city; every house was entered, every article of subsistence was pillaged, and the most wanton barbarities were committed. Nothing could restrain their fury; wherever there was the appearance or scent of food, the human bloodhounds tracked it out, and though a general famine raged around, though they were ever trampling on the dead, and though the habitations for the living were converted into charnel-houses, nothing could intimidate, or appal, or satisfy, or shock them, till Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, a lady once rich and noble, displayed to them and offered them all her remaining food, the scent of which had attracted them in their search,—the bitterest morsel that ever mother or mortal tasted,—the remnant of her half-eaten suckling. Sixty thousand Roman soldiers unremittingly besieged them; they encompassed Jerusalem with a wall, and hemmed them in on every side; they brought down their high and fenced walls to the ground; they slaughtered the slaughterers, they spared not the people; they burned the temple, in defiance of the commands, the threats, and the resistance of their general. With it the last hope of all the Jews was extinguished. They raised, at the sight, an universal but an expiring cry of sorrow and despair. Ten thousand were there slain, and six thousand victims were enveloped in its blaze. The whole city, full of the famished dying, and of the murdered dead, presented no picture but that of despair, no scene but of horror. The aqueducts and the city sewers were crowded as the last refuge of the hopeless. Two thousand were found dead there, and many were dragged from thence and slain. The Roman soldiers put all indiscriminately to death, and ceased not till they became faint and weary and overpowered with the work of destruction. But they only sheathed the sword to light the torch. They set fire to the city in various places. The flames spread everywhere, and were checked but for a moment by the red streamlets in every street. Jerusalem

became heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. Within the circuit of a few miles, in the space of five months,—foes and famine, pillage and pestilence within,—a triple wall around, and besieged every moment from without,—eleven hundred thousand human beings perished, though the tale of each of them was a tragedy. Was there ever so concentrated a mass of misery? Could any prophecy be more faithfully and awfully fulfilled? The prospect of his own crucifixion, when Jesus was on his way to Calvary, was not more clearly before him, and seemed to affect him less, than the fate of Jerusalem. How full of tenderness, and fraught with truth, was the sympathetic response of the condoling sufferer, to the wailings and lamentations of the women who followed him, when he turned unto them and beheld the city, which some of them might yet see wrapt in flames and drenched in blood, and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they will say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" No impostor ever betrayed such feelings as a man, nor predicted events so unlikely, astonishing, and true, as an attestation of a divine commission. Jesus revealed the very judgments of God; for such the instrument, by whom it was accomplished, interpreted the capture and destruction of Jerusalem, acknowledging that his own power would otherwise have been ineffectual. When eulogized for the victory, Titus disclaimed the praise, affirming that he was only the instrument of executing the sentence of the divine justice. And their own historian asserts, in conformity with every declaration of Scripture upon the subject, that the iniquities of the Jews were as unparalleled as their punishment

All these prophecies, of which we have been reviewing the accomplishment, were delivered in a time of per-

fect peace, when the Jews retained their own laws, and enjoyed the protection, as they were subject to the authority, of the Roman empire, then in the zenith of its power. The wonder excited in the minds of his disciples at the strength and stability of the temple, drew forth from Jesus the announcement of its speedy and utter ruin. He foretold the appearance of false Christs and pretended prophets; the wars and rumours of wars; the famines and pestilences and earthquakes and fearful sights that were to ensue; the persecution of his disciples; the apostasy of many; the propagation of the gospel; the sign that should warn his disciples to flee from approaching ruin; the encompassing and enclosing of Jerusalem; the grievous affliction of the tender sex; the unequalled miseries of all; the entire destruction of the city; the shortening of their sufferings, that still more might be saved; and that all this dread crowd of events, which might well have occupied the progress of ages, was to pass away within the limits of a single generation. None but He who discerns futurity could have foretold and described all these things; and their complete and literal fulfilment shows them to be indubitably the revelation of God.

But the prophecies also mark minuter facts, if possible, more unlikely to have happened. Jerusalem was to be ploughed over as a field; to be laid even with the ground; of the temple one stone was not to be left upon another; the Jews were to be few in number; to be led captive into all nations; to be sold for slaves, and none would buy them. And each of these predictions was strictly verified. Titus commanded the whole city and temple to be razed from the foundation. The soldiers were not then disobedient to their general. Avarice combined with duty and with resentment: the altar, the temple, the walls and the city, were overthrown from the base, in search of the treasures which the Jews, beset on every hand by plunderers, had concealed and buried during the siege. Three towers and the remnant of a wall alone stood, the monument and memorial of Jerusalem; and

the city was afterwards ploughed over by Terentius Rufus. In the siege, and in the previous and subsequent destruction of the cities and villages of Judea, according to the specified enumeration of Josephus, about one million three hundred thousand suffered death. Ninety-seven thousand were led into captivity. They were sold for slaves, and were so despised and disesteemed, that many remained unpurchased. And their conquerors were so prodigal of their lives, that, in honour of the birth-day of Domitian, two thousand five hundred of them were placed, in savage sport, to contend with wild beasts, and otherwise to be put to death.[1]

But the miseries of their race were not then at a close. There was a curse on the land, that hath scathed it, a judgment on the people, that hath scattered them throughout the world. Many prophecies respecting them yet remain to be considered, and much of their history is yet untold. The prophecies are as clear as the facts are visible.

[1] Tacitus, who flourished about thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, speaks of the strength of the fortifications of that city, the immense riches and strength of the temple, the factions that raged during the siege, as well as of the prodigies that preceded its fall. And he particularly mentions the large army brought by Vespasian to subdue Judea, "a fact which shows the magnitude and importance of the expedition." Philostratus particularly relates, that Titus declared, after the capture of Jerusalem, that he was not worthy of the crown of victory, as he had only lent his hand to the execution of a work in which God was pleased to manifest his anger. Dion Cassius records the conquest of Judea by Titus and Vespasian, the obstinate and bloody resistance of the Jews during the siege, the destruction of the temple by fire. It is recorded by Maimonides, and in the Jewish Talmud, (as cited by Basnage and Lardner,) that Terentius Rufus, an officer in the Roman army, tore up with a ploughshare the foundations of the temple. The triumphal arch of Titus, commemorative of the destruction of Jerusalem, and with figures of Roman soldiers bearing on their shoulders the holy vessels of the temple, is still to be seen at Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE JEWS.

While Moses, as a divine legislator, promised to the Israelites that their prosperity and happiness and peace would all keep pace with their obedience, he threatened them with a gradation of punishments, rising in proportion to their impenitence and iniquity: and neither in blessings nor in chastisements hath the Ruler among the nations dealt in like manner with any people. But their wickedness, and consequent calamities, greatly preponderated and are yet prolonged. The retrospect of the history of the Jews, since their dispersion, could not, at the present day, be drawn in truer terms, than in the unpropitious auguries of their prophet above three thousand two hundred years ago. In the most ancient of all records, we read the lively representation of the present condition of the most singular people upon earth. Moses professed to look through the glass of ages; the revolution of many centuries has brought the object immediately before us: we may scrutinize the features of futurity as they then appeared to his prophetic gaze; and we may determine between the probabilities whether they were conjectures of a mortal who "knows not what a day may bring forth," or the revelation of that Being "in whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday."

"I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. And upon them that are left of you I will send a faintness into their hearts, in the lands of their enemies: and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth;—and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your

enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers, shall they pine away with them. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly.[1] And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen whither the Lord shall lead you.[2] The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them, and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.[3] The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart; and thou shalt grope at noonday as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people. There shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land and all thy labours shall a nation, which thou knowest not, eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always; so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. The Lord shall bring thee unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known;—and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.[4] Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things; and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. And the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues and of long continuance.[5] All these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee;—and they shall be

[1] Lev. xxvi. 33, 36—39, 44. [2] Deut. iv. 27. [3] Deut. xxviii. 25.
[4] Deut. xxviii. 28, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37. [5] Deut. xxviii. 47, 48, 59

upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see."[1]

The writings of all the succeeding prophets abound with similar predictions. "I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth. I will cast them out into a land that they know not, where I will show them no favour. I will feed them with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known.[2] I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them: and I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.[3] I will bereave them of children: I will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them.[4] I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will

[1] Deut. xxviii. 45, 46, 63—67. [2] Jer. xv. 4, xvi. 13, ix. 15, 16.
[3] Jer. xxiv. 9, 10. [4] Jer. xv. 7, xxix. 18.

I scatter into all the winds.[1] I will scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.[2] They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord; they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels, because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.[3] I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. Death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the Lord of hosts. They shall be wanderers among the nations.[4] Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.[5] Though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them; and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good. But he that scattereth Israel will gather him and keep him.[6] But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel; for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity.—I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not utterly cut thee off, or leave thee wholly unpunished.[7] The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and with-

[1] Ezek. v. 10. [2] Ezek. xii. 15. [3] Ezek. vii. 19.
[4] Amos ix. 9; Jer. viii. 3; Hos. ix. 17. [5] Isa. vi. 10—12.
[6] Amos ix. 4; Jer. xxxi. 10. [7] Jer. xlvi. 27, 28.

out an ephod, and without a teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."[1]

All these predictions respecting the Jews are delivered with the clearness of history and the confidence of truth. They represent the manner, the extent, the nature, and the continuance of their dispersion; their persecutions, their blindness, their sufferings, their feebleness, their fearfulness, their pusillanimity, their ceaseless wanderings, their hardened impenitence, their insatiable avarice, and the grievous oppression, the continued spoliation, the marked distinction, the universal mockery, the unextinguishable existence, and unlimited diffusion of their race. *They were to be plucked from off their own land, smitten before their enemies, consumed from off their own land, and left few in number.* The Romans destroyed their cities and ravaged their country; and the inhabitants who escaped from the famine, the pestilence, the sword, and the captivity, were forcibly expelled from Judea, and fled, as houseless wanderers, into all the surrounding regions. But they clung, for a time, around the land which their fathers had possessed for so many ages, and on which they looked as an inheritance allotted by Heaven to their race; and they would not relinquish their claim to the possession of it by any single overthrow, however great. Unparalleled as were the miseries which they had suffered in the slaughter of their kindred, the loss of their property and their homes, the annihilation of their power, the destruction of their capital city, and the devastation of their country by Titus; yet the fugitive and exiled Jews soon resorted again to their native soil; and sixty years had scarcely elapsed, when, deceived by an impostor, allured by the hope of a triumphant Messiah, and excited to revolt by intolerable oppression, they strove by a vigorous and united but frantic effort to reconquer Judea, to cast off the power of the Romans, which had everywhere

[1] Hosea iii. 4, 5.

crushed them, and to rescue themselves and their country from ruin. A war which their enthusiasm and desperation alike protracted for two years, and in which, exclusive of a vast number that perished by famine and sickness and fire, five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are said to have been slain, terminated in their entire discomfiture and final banishment. They were so beset on every side, and cut down in detached portions by the Roman soldiers, that, in the words of a heathen historian, very few of them escaped. Fifty of their strongholds were razed from the ground, and their cities sacked and consumed by fire; Judea was laid waste and left as a desert.[1] Though a similar fate never befell any other people without proving the extirpation of their race or the last of their miseries, that awful prediction, in its reference to the Jews, met its full completion, which yet they survive, to await in every country, when exiles from their own, an accumulation of almost unceasing calamities, protracted throughout many succeeding ages. *The cities shall be wasted without inhabitant. Every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. They were rooted out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation.*[2] A public edict of the emperor Adrian rendered it a capital crime for a Jew to set a foot in Jerusalem;[3] and prohibited them from viewing it even at a distance. Heathens, Christians, and Mahometans have alternately possessed Judea. It has been a prey of the Saracens: the descendants of Ishmael have often overrun it: the children of Israel have alone been denied the possession of it, though thither they ever wish to return, and though it forms the only spot on earth where the ordinances of their religion can be observed. And, amidst all the revolutions of states, and the extinction of many nations,

[1] Dion Cassius, lib. lxix. Jackson, Patrick, Basnage, &c.

[2] Isaiah vi. 11; Jer. iv. 29; Deut. xxix. 28.

[3] Tertul. Ap. c. xxi. p. 51; Ibid. Adv. Judæos, c. xiii. p. 146, ed. Paris, 1608. Basnage's Continuation of Josephus, b. vi. c. 9, § 27.

in so long a period, the Jews alone have not only ever been aliens in the land of their fathers, but whenever any of them have been permitted, at any period since the time of their dispersion, to sojourn there, they have experienced even more contumelious treatment than elsewhere. Benjamin of Tudela, who travelled in the twelfth century through great part of Europe and of Asia, found the Jews everywhere oppressed, *particularly in the Holy Land.* And to this day, (while the Jews who reside in Palestine, or who resort thither in old age, that their bones may not be laid in a foreign land, are alike ill-treated and abused by Greeks, Armenians, and Europeans,[1]) the haughty deportment of the despotic Mussulman, and the abject state of the poor and helpless Jews, are painted to the life by the prophet. *The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high, and thou shalt come down very low.*[2]

But the extent is still more remarkable than the manner of their dispersion. Many prophecies describe it, and foretold, thousands of years ago, what we now behold. *They have been scattered among the nations—among the heathen—among the people, even from one end of the earth unto the other. They have been removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; the whole remnant of them has been scattered into all the winds: they have been dispersed throughout all countries, and sifted among the nations like as corn is sifted in a sieve, and yet not the least grain has fallen upon the earth:* though dispersed throughout all nations, they have remained distinct from them all. And there is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. They are citizens of the world, without a country. Neither mountains, nor rivers, nor deserts, nor oceans, which are the boundaries of other nations, have terminated their wanderings. They abound in Poland, in Holland, in Russia, and in Turkey. In Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, they are more thinly scattered. In Persia,

[1] General Straton's MS. Journal. [2] Deut. xxviii. 43.

China, and India, on the east and on the west of the Ganges, they are *few in number among the heathen.* They have trod the snows of Siberia, and the sands of the burning desert; and the European traveller hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, even in the very interior of Africa, south of Timbuctoo.[1] From Moscow to Lisbon, from Japan to Britain, from Borneo to Archangel, from Hindostan to Honduras, no inhabitant of any nation upon the earth would be known in all the intervening regions but a Jew alone.

But the history of the Jews throughout the whole world, and in every age since their dispersion, verifies the most minute predictions concerning them; and to a recital of facts, too well authenticated to admit of dispute, or too notorious for contradiction, may be added a description of them all in the very terms of the prophecy. In the words of Basnage, the elaborate historian of the Jews, "Kings have often employed the severity of their edicts, and the hands of the executioner, to destroy them; the seditious multitude has performed massacres and executions infinitely more tragical than the princes. Both kings and people, heathens, Christians, and Mahometans, who are opposite in so many things, have united in the design of ruining this nation, and have not been able to effect it. The bush of Moses, surrounded with flames, has always burnt without consuming. The Jews have been driven from all places of the world, which has only served to disperse them in all parts of the universe. They have, from age to age, run through misery and persecution, and torrents of their own blood."[2] Their banishment from Judea was only the prelude to their expulsion from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom. Their dispersion over the globe is an irrefragable evidence of this, and many records remain that amply corroborate the fact. Not only did the first and second centuries of the Christian era

[1] Lyon's Travels in Africa, p. 146.

[2] Basnage, b. vi. c. i. § 1; Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 181, &c.

see them twice rooted out of their own land, but each succeeding century has teemed with new calamities to that once chosen but now long-rejected race. The history of their sufferings is a continued tale of horror. Revolt is natural to the oppressed; and their frequent seditions were productive of renewed privations and distresses. Emperors, kings, and caliphs all united in subjecting them to the same "iron yoke." Constantine, after having suppressed a revolt which they raised, and having commanded their ears to be cut off, dispersed them as fugitives and vagabonds into different countries, whither they carried, in terror to their kindred, the mark of their suffering and infamy. In the fifth century they were expelled from Alexandria, which had long been one of their safest places of resort. Justinian, from whose principles of legislation a wiser and more humane policy ought to have emanated, yielded to none of his predecessors in hostility and severity against them. He abolished their synagogues, prohibited them even from entering into caves for the exercise of their worship, rendered their testimony inadmissible, and deprived them of the natural right of bequeathing their property: and when such oppressive enactments led to insurrectionary movements among the Jews, their property was confiscated, many of them were beheaded, and so bloody an execution of them prevailed, that, as is expressly related, "all the Jews of that country trembled;"[1] *a trembling heart was given them.* In the reign of the tyrant Phocas, a general sedition broke out among the Jews in Syria. They and their enemies fought with equal desperation. They obtained the mastery in Antioch; but a momentary victory only led to a deeper humiliation, and to the infliction of more aggravated cruelties than before. They were soon subdued and taken captive; many of them were maimed, others executed, and all the survivors were banished from the city. Gregory the Great afforded them a temporary respite from oppression, which only rendered their

[1] Basnage's Hist. b. vi. c. xxi. § 9.

spoliation more complete, and their suffering more acute, under the cruel oppression of Heraclius. That emperor, unable to satiate his hatred against them by inflicting a variety of punishments on those who resided within his own dominions, and by finally expelling them from the empire, exerted so effectually against them his influence in other countries, that they suffered under a general and simultaneous persecution from Asia to the furthest extremities of Europe.[1] In Spain, conversion, imprisonment, or banishment, were their only alternatives. In France, a similar fate awaited them. They fled from country to country, seeking in vain any rest for the sole of their foot. Even the wide-extended plains of Asia afforded them no resting-place, but have often been spotted with their blood, as well as the hills and valleys of Europe. Mahomet, whose imposture has been the law and the faith of such countless millions, has, from the precepts of the Koran, infused into the minds of his followers a spirit of rancour and enmity towards the despised and misbelieving Jews. He set an early example of persecution against them, which the Mahometans have not yet ceased to imitate. In the third year of the Hegira, he besieged the castles which they possessed in the Hegiasa, compelled those who had fled to them for refuge and defence to an unconditional surrender, banished them the country, and parted their property among his Mussulmans. He dissipated a second time their recombined strength, massacred many of them, and imposed upon the remnant a permanent tribute. The church of Rome ever ranked and treated them as heretics. The canons of different councils pronounced excommunication against those who should favour or uphold the Jews against Christians; enjoined all Christians neither to eat nor to hold any commerce with them; prohibited them from bearing public offices or having Christian slaves; appointed them to be distinguished by a mark; decreed that their children should be taken from them, and brought up in monasteries;

[1] Basnage's Hist. b. vi. c. xxi. § 17.

and, what is equally descriptive of the low estimation in which they were held, and of the miseries to which they were subjected, there was often a necessity, even for those who otherwise oppressed them, to ordain that it was not lawful to take the life of a Jew without any cause.[1] Hallam's account of the Jews, during the middle ages, is short, but significant. "They were everywhere the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre. A time of festivity to others was often the season of mockery and persecution to them. It was the custom at Thoulouse to smite them on the face every Easter. At Beziers they were attacked with stones from Palm-Sunday to Easter, an anniversary of insult and cruelty generally productive of bloodshed, and to which the populace were regularly instigated by a sermon from the bishop. It was the policy of the kings of France to employ them as a sponge to suck their subjects' money, which they might afterwards express with less odium than direct taxation would incur. It is almost incredible to what a length extortion of money from the Jews was carried. A series of alternate persecution and tolerance was borne by this extraordinary people with an invincible perseverance, and a talent of accumulating riches, which kept pace with the exactions of their plunderers. Philip Augustus released all Christians in his dominions from their debts to the Jews, reserving a fifth part to himself. He afterwards expelled the whole nation from France."[2] St. Louis twice banished, and twice recalled them; and Charles VI. finally expelled them from France. From that country, according to Mezeray, they were seven times banished. They were expelled from Spain; and by the lowest computation, one hundred and seventy thousand fami-

[1] Dupin's Ecc. Hist. Canons of different councils; Toledo, A. D. 633; Meaux, 845; Paris, 846; Pavia, 850; Metz, Coyaco, 1050; Rouen, 1074; Ravenna, 1311; Saltzburgh, 1420.

[2] Hallam, vol. i. pp. 233, 234.

lies departed from that kingdom.[1] "At Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spires, Worms, many thousands of them were pillaged and massacred. A remnant was saved by a feigned and transient conversion; but the greater part of them barricaded their houses, and precipitated themselves, their families, and their wealth, into the rivers or the flames. These massacres and depredations on the Jews were renewed at each crusade."[2] In England, also, they suffered great cruelty and oppression at the same period. During the crusades, the whole nation united in the persecution of them. In a single instance at York, fifteen hundred Jews, including women and children, were refused all quarter, could not purchase their lives at any price, and, frantic with despair, perished by a mutual slaughter. Each master was the murderer of his family, when death became their only deliverance. The scene of the castle of Massada, which was their last fortress in Palestine, and where nearly one thousand perished in a similar manner,[3] was renewed in the castle of York. So despised and hated were they, that the barons, when contending with Henry III., to ingratiate themselves with the populace, ordered seven hundred Jews to be slaughtered at once, their houses to be plundered, and their synagogue to be burned. Richard, John, and Henry III. often extorted money from them; and the last, by the most unscrupulous and unsparing measures, usually defrayed his extraordinary expenses with their spoils, and impoverished some of the richest among them. His extortions at last became so enormous, and his oppression so grievous, that, in the words of the historian, he reduced the miserable wretches to desire leave to depart the kingdom;[4] but even self-banishment was denied them. Edward I. completed their misery, seized on all their property, and banished them

[1] Basnage, b. vii. c. xxi. Bishop Newton.

[2] Gibbon's Hist. vol. xi. c. lviii. p. 26.

[3] Basnage, b. vii. c. x. sect. 20; Joseph. b. vii. c. viii ix. Bp. Newton; Rapin's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 97.

[4] Rapin's History of England, vol. iii. p. 405.

the kingdom. Above fifteen thousand Jews were rendered destitute of any residence, were despoiled to the utmost, and reduced to ruin. Nearly four centuries elapsed before the return to Britain of this abused race.

Some remarkable circumstances attest, without a prolonged detail of their miseries, that they have been a people everywhere peculiarly oppressed. The first unequivocal attempt at legislation in France was an ordinance against the Jews. And towards them alone one of the noblest charters of liberty on earth—Magna Charta, the Briton's boast—legalized an act of injustice.[1] For many ages after their dispersion, they found no resting-place in Europe, Asia, or Africa, but penetrated, in search of one, to the extremities of the world. In Mahometan countries they have ever been subject to persecution, contempt, and every abuse. They are in general confined to one particular quarter of every city, (as they formerly were to old Jewry in London;) they are restricted to a peculiar dress; and in many places are shut up at stated hours. In Hamadan, as in all parts of Persia, "they are an abject race, and support themselves by driving a peddling trade;—they live in a state of great misery, pay a monthly tax to the government, and are not permitted to cultivate the ground, or to have landed possessions."[2] They cannot appear in public, much less perform their religious ceremonies, without being treated with scorn and contempt.[3] The revenues of the prince of Bokhara are derived from a tribute paid by five hundred families of Jews, who are assessed according to the means of each. In Zante they exist in miserable indigence, and are exposed to considerable oppression.[4] At Tripoli, when any criminal is condemned to death, the first Jew who happens to be at hand is compelled to become the executioner; a degradation to the children of Israel to which no Moor is ever subjected.[5] In Egypt

[1] Articles xii. xiii.
[2] Morier's Travels in Persia, p. 379.
[3] Sir J. Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. ii. p. 425.
[4] Hughes' Travels, vol. i. p. 150. [5] Lyon's Travels, p. 16.

they are despised and persecuted incessantly.[1] In Arabia they are treated with more contempt than in Turkey.[2] The remark is common to the most recent travellers both in Asia and Africa,[3] that the Jews themselves are astonished, and the natives indignant, at any act of kindness, or even of justice, that is performed towards any of this "despised nation" and persecuted people. In Southey's Letters from Spain and Portugal, this remarkable testimony is borne respecting them; "Till within the last fifty years the burning of a Jew formed the highest delight of the Portuguese; they thronged to behold this triumph of the faith, and the very women shouted with transport as they saw the agonized martyr writhe at the stake. Neither sex nor age could save this persecuted race; and Antonio Joseph de Silvia, the best of their dramatic writers, was burned alive because he was a Jew." Few years have elapsed since there was a severe persecution against them in Prussia and in Germany, and in several of the smaller states of the latter country they are not permitted to sell any goods even in the common markets. The pope has lately re-enacted some severe edicts against them: and ukases have recently been issued in quick succession,[4] restraining the Jews from all traffic throughout the interior government of Russia. They are absolutely prohibited, on pain of immediate banishment, from "offering any article to sale,"[5] whether in public or private, either by themselves or by others. They are not allowed to reside, even for a limited period, in any of the cities of Russia, without an express permission from government, which is granted only in cases where their services are necessary or directly

[1] Denon's Travels in Egypt, vol. i. p. 213.

[2] Niebuhr's Travels, vol. i. p. 408.

[3] Morier's Travels in Persia, p. 266; Lyon's Travels in Africa, p. 32.

[4] 15th November, 1797. 25th February, 1823. 8th June, 1826. (August or November) 1827.

[5] Ukase, quoted from "The World," of date 31st October, 1827 Ib. article viii.

beneficial to the state. A refusal to depart, when they become obnoxious to so rigid a law, subjects them to be treated as vagrants; and none are suffered to protect or to shelter them. Though the observance of such edicts must, in numerous instances, leave them destitute of any means of support, yet their breach or neglect exposes them to oppression under the sanction of the law, and to every privation and insult, without remedy or appeal. And though they may thus become the greatest objects of pity, all laws of humanity are reversed by imperial decrees towards them. For those who harbour Jews that are condemned to banishment for having done what all others may innocently do, are, as the last Russian ukase respecting them bears, "amenable to the laws as the abettors of vagrants," *and*, as in numberless instances besides, *no man shall save them.*

While the recent ameliorated condition of the Jews in the more civilized countries of Europe begins to give promise of the dawn of that day when the cup of trembling shall be taken out of their hands, and while signs are not wanting to show that it shall be given into the hands of their enemies, new illustrations may still be adduced to this hour of the indignities and miseries to which they are subjected. The latest testimony from Turkey bears that "it is impossible to express the contemptuous hatred in which the Osmanlis (Turks) hold the Jewish people; and the *veriest* Turkish *urchin* who may encounter one of the fallen nation on his path, has his mite of insult to add to the degradation of the outcast and wandering race of Israel. Nor dare the oppressed party revenge himself even upon this puny enemy, whom his very name suffices to raise up against him."[1] Instances are added of a Turkish boy of ten years of age felling to the earth a feeble Jewess, and of Turkish boys, in their amusements, insulting and tormenting a Jew. *I will give children to be their princes;*

[1] The City of the Sultan, and the Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1836, by Miss Pardoe, vol. ii. p. 362, 363.

and babes shall rule over them. As for my people, children are their oppressors.[1]

These facts, though they form but a brief and most imperfect record, and therefore but a very faint image of all their sufferings, show that the Jews *have been removed into all kingdoms for their hurt; that a sword has been drawn after them; that they have found no rest for the sole of their foot; that they have not been able to stand before their enemies; there has been no might in their hands; their very avarice has proved their misery; they have been spoiled evermore; they have been oppressed and crushed alway; they have been mad for the sight of their eyes that they did see*, as the tragical scenes at Massada, and York, and many others testify: *they have often been left in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and in want of all things; a trembling heart and sorrow of mind have been their portion; they have often had none assurance of their life; their plagues have been wonderful and great, and of long continuance; and they have been for a sign and for a wonder during many generations.*

But the predictions rest not even here. It was distinctly prophesied that the Jews would reject the gospel; that, from the meanness of his mortal appearance, and the hardness of their hearts, they would not believe in a suffering Messiah; *that they would be smitten with blindness and astonishment of heart; that they would continue long, having their ears deaf, their eyes closed, and their hearts hardened; and that they would grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.*[2] And the great body of the Jewish nation has continued long to reject Christianity. They retain the prophecies, but discern not their light, having obscured them by their traditions. Many of their received opinions are so absurd and impious, their rites are so unmeaning and frivolous, their ceremonies are so minute, absurd, and contemptible, that the account of them would surpass credibility, were it not a transcript of their customs and of their manners, and

[1] Isa. iii. 4, 12. [2] Deut. xxviii. 29.

drawn from their own authorities.[1] No words can more strikingly or justly represent the contrast between their irrational tenets, their degraded religion, their superstitious observances, and the dictates of enlightened reason, and of the gospel which they vilify, than the emphatic description, *They grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.* And if any other instances be wanting of the prediction of events infinitely exceeding human foresight, the dispositions of all nations respecting them are revealed as explicitly as their own. That the Jews have been *a proverb, an astonishment, a by-word, a taunt, and a hissing among all nations,*—though one of the most wonderful of facts, unparalleled in the whole history of mankind, and as inconceivable in its prediction as miraculous in its accomplishment,—is a truth that stands not in need of any illustration or proof, and of which witnesses could be found in every country under heaven. Many prophecies concerning the Jews, of more propitious import, that yet remain to be accomplished, are reserved for testimonies to future generations, if not to the present.[2] But it is worthy of remark, as prophesied concerning them, that they have *not* been *utterly destroyed, though a full end has been made of their enemies;* that the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Romans, though some of the mightiest monarchies that ever existed, have not a single representative on earth; while the Jews, oppressed and vanquished, banished and enslaved, and spoiled evermore, have survived them all, and to this hour overspread the world. Of all the nations around Judea, the Persians alone, who restored them from the Babylonish captivity, yet remain a kingdom.

The Scriptures also declare that the covenant with Abraham, that God would give the land of Canaan to his seed for an everlasting possession, would never be broken; but that the children of Israel shall be taken from among the heathen, gathered on every side, and

[1] See Allen's Modern Judaism. The Edinburgh Encyclopedia, art. *Jews.*

[2] See Appendix, No. II.

brought into their own land, to dwell forever where their fathers dwelt. Three thousand seven hundred years have elapsed since the promise was given to Abraham: and is it less than a miracle, that, if this promise had been made to the descendants of any but of Abraham alone, it could not now possibly have been realized, as there exists not on earth the known and acknowledged posterity of any other individual, or almost of any nation, contemporary with him?

That the people of a single state (which was of very limited extent and power in comparison of some of the monarchies which surrounded it) should first have been rooted up out of their own land in anger, wrath, and great indignation, the like of which was never experienced by the mightiest among the ancient empires, which all fell imperceptibly away at a lighter stroke; and that afterwards, though scattered among all nations, and finding no ease among them all, they should have withstood eighteen centuries of almost unremitted persecution; and that after so many generations have elapsed, they should still retain their distinctive form, or, as it may be called, their individuality of character, is assuredly the most marvellous event that is recorded in the history of nations; and if it be not acknowledged as a "sign," it is in reality, as well as in appearance, "a wonder," the most inexplicable within the province of the philosophy of history. But that, after the endurance of such manifold woes, such perpetual spoliation, and so many ages of unmitigated suffering, during which their life was to hang in doubt within them, they should still be, as actually they are, the possessors of great wealth; and that this fact should so strictly accord with the prophecy, which describes them on their final restoration to Judea, as taking *their silver and their gold with them*, and eating the riches of the gentiles;[1] and also that, though captives or fugitives "few in number," and the miserable remnant of an extinguished kingdom at the time they were "scattered abroad," they should be to this hour

[1] Isa. lx. 9, lxi. 6.

numerous people,—and that this should have been expressly implied in the prophetic declaration descriptive of their condition on their restoration to Judea, after all their wanderings, that *the land shall be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and that place shall not be found for them*;[1] are facts which as clearly show, to those who consider them at all, the operation of an overruling Providence, as the revelation of such an inscrutable destiny is the manifest dictate of inspiration.

Such are the *prophecies*, and such are the *facts*, respecting the Jews; and from premises like these the feeblest logician may draw a moral demonstration. If they had been utterly destroyed; if they had mingled among the nations: if, in the space of nearly eighteen centuries after their dispersion, they had become extinct as a people; even if they had been secluded in a single region, and had remained united; if their history had been analogous to that of any nation upon the earth, an attempt might, with some plausibility or reason, have been made, to show cause why the prediction of their fate, however true to the fact, ought not in such case to be sustained as evidence of the truth of inspiration. Or if the past history and present state of the Jews were not of a nature so singular and peculiar as to bear out to the very letter the truth of the prophecies concerning them, with what triumph would the infidel have produced these very prophecies as fatal to the idea of the inspiration of the Scriptures! And when the Jews have been scattered throughout the whole earth; when they have remained everywhere a distinct race; when they have been despoiled evermore, and yet never destroyed; when the most wonderful and amazing facts, such as never occurred among any people, form the ordinary narrative of their history, and fulfil literally the prophecies concerning them, may not the believer challenge his adversary to the production of such credentials of the faith that is in *him*? They present an unbroken chain of evidence, each link a prophecy and a fact, extending

[1] Isa. xlix. 19; Zech. x. 10.

throughout a multitude of generations, and not yet terminated. Though the events, various and singular as they are, have been brought about by the instrumentality of human means, and the agency of secondary causes, yet they are equally prophetic and miraculous; for the means were as impossible to be foreseen as the end, and the causes were as inscrutable as the event; and they have been, and still in numberless instances are, accomplished by the instrumentality of the enemies of Christianity. Whoever seeks a miracle, may here behold a sign and a wonder, than which there cannot be a greater. And the Christian may bid defiance to all the assaults of his enemies from this stronghold of Christianity, impenetrable and impregnable on every side.

The prophecies concerning the Jews are as clear as a narrative of the events. They are ancient as the oldest records in existence; and it has never been denied that they were all delivered before the accomplishment of one of them. They were so unimaginable by human wisdom, that the whole compass of nature has never exhibited a parallel to the events. And the facts are visible, and present, and applicable even to a hair-breadth. Could Moses, as an uninspired mortal, have described the history, the fate, the dispersion, the treatment, the dispositions of the Israelites to the present day, or for three thousand two hundred years, seeing that he was astonished, and amazed on his descent from Sinai, at the change in their sentiments and in their conduct, in the space of forty days? Could various persons have testified, in different ages, of the self-same and of similar facts, as wonderful as they have proved to be true? Could they have divulged so many secrets of futurity, when of necessity they were utterly ignorant of them all? The probabilities are infinite against them. For the mind of man often fluctuates in uncertainty over the nearest events and the most probable results; but in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have elapsed, and to facts respecting them, contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or concep-

tion, it feels that they are dark as death to mortal ken. And, viewing only the dispersion of the Jews, and some of its attendant circumstances; how their city was laid desolate; their temple, which formed the constant place of their resort before, levelled with the ground, and ploughed over like a field; their country ravaged, and themselves murdered in mass; falling before the sword, the famine and the pestilence; how a remnant was left, but despoiled, persecuted, enslaved, and led into captivity; driven from their own land, not to a mountainous retreat, where they might subsist with safety, but dispersed among all nations, and left to the mercy of a world that everywhere hated and oppressed them; shattered in pieces like the wreck of a vessel in a mighty storm; scattered over the earth, like fragments on the waters, and, instead of disappearing, or mingling with the nations, remaining a perfectly distinct people, in every kingdom the same, retaining similar habits and customs, and creeds, and manners, in every part of the globe, though without ephod, teraphim, or sacrifice; meeting everywhere the same insult, and mockery, and oppression; finding no resting-place without an enemy soon to dispossess them; multiplying amidst all their miseries; surviving their enemies; beholding, unchanged, the extinction of many nations, and the convulsions of all; robbed of their silver and of their gold, though cleaving to the love of them still, as the stumbling-block of their iniquity; often bereaved of their very children; disjoined and disorganized, but uniform and unaltered; ever bruised, but never broken; weak, fearful, sorrowful, and afflicted; often driven to madness at the spectacle of their own misery; taken up in the lips of talkers; the taunt and hissing, and infamy of all people, and continuing ever, what they are to this day, the sole proverb common to the whole world; how did every fact, from its very nature, defy all conjecture, and how could mortal man, overlooking a hundred successive generations, have foretold any one of these wonders that are now conspicuous in these latter times? Who

but the Father of spirits, possessed of perfect prescience, even of the knowledge of the will, and of the actions of free, intelligent, and moral agents, could have revealed their unbounded and yet unceasing wanderings, unveiled all their destiny, and unmasked the minds of the Jews and of their enemies, in every age and in every clime? The creation of a world might as well be the work of chance as the revelation of these things. It is a visible display of the power and of the prescience of God, an accumulation of many miracles. And although it forms but a part of a small portion of the Christian evidence, it lays not only a stone of stumbling, such as infidels would try to cast in a Christian's path, but it fixes an insurmountable barrier at the very threshold of infidelity, immovable by all human device, and impervious to every attack.

CHAPTER V.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE LAND OF JUDEA AND CIRCUMJACENT COUNTRIES.

The writings of the Jewish prophets not only described the fate of that people for many generations subsequent to the latest period to which the most unyielding skepticism can pretend to affix the date of these predictions; but while the cities were teeming with inhabitants, and the land flowing with abundance, for centuries before Judea ceased to count its millions, they foretold the long reign of desolation that would ensue. The land is a witness as well as the people. Its aspect in the present day is the precise likeness delineated by the pencil of prophecy, when every feature that could admit of change was the reverse of what it now is: and it is necessary only to compare the predictions themselves with that proof of their fulfilment which, were

all other testimony to be excluded, heathens and infidels supply.

The calamities of the Jews were to arise progressively with their iniquities. They were to be punished again and again, "yet seven times for their sins."[1] And in the greatest of the denunciations which were to fill up the measure of their punishments, the long-continued desolation of their country is ranked among the worst and latest of their woes; and the prophecies respecting it which admit of a *literal* interpretation, and which have been literally fulfilled, are abundantly clear and expressive.

"I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her Sabbaths. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her Sabbaths while she lieth desolate without them.[2] So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? The anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book.[3] Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should

[1] Levit. xxvii. 18, 21, 24. [2] Levit. xxvi. 31—34, 43.
[3] Deut. xxix. 23, 24, 27

have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.[1] Ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.[2] I will lay my vineyard waste. Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant. Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah. Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat one shall strangers eat.[3] Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth; and it shall return and shall be eaten; as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves.[4] The Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.[5] The glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean: and it shall be as when the harvest-man gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim. Yet gleaning-grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive-tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel.[6] Behold, the Lord maketh the earth[7] (the land) empty,

[1] Isa. i. 7—9. [2] Isa. i. 30. [3] Isa. v. 6, 9, 10, 17.
[4] Isa. vi. 11—13. [5] Isa. x. 23. [6] Isa. xvii. 4—6.

[7] The twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah contains a continuous prophetic description (exactly analogous to other predictions) of the desolation of Judea, during the time that the "inhabitants thereof" were to be "scattered abroad;" and it is only necessary, in order to prevent any appearance of ambiguity, to remark, that the very same word in the original, which in the English translation is here rendered *earth*, is, in subsequent verses of the same chapter, also translated *land;* evidently implying the land of Israel, the inhabitants of which were to be "scattered abroad;" and so obviously is this the meaning of the word, that the chapter is properly entitled "the deplorable judgments of God upon the land."

and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth (land) mourneth and fadeth away; it is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate, and few men left. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning-grapes when the vintage is done.[1] Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down and consume the branches thereof. When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come and set them on fire; for it is a people of no understanding.[2] Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women; for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones; strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city; because the palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; until the Spirit be poured

[1] Isa. xxiv. 1, 3—11, 13. [2] Isa. xxvii. 10, 11.

upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.[1] The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth; he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down; Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.[2] Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled. I beheld, and lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn,—because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.[3] How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage. Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. They have made it desolate, and being desolate it mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart. The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness;—no flesh shall have peace. They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns; they have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit; and they shall be ashamed of your revenues, because of the fierce anger of the Lord.[4] Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains of Israel, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. In all your dwelling-places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate. I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath, in all their habitations.[5]

[1] Isa. xxxii. 10—15. [2] Isa. xxxiii. 8, 9.
[3] Jer. iv. 20, 26—28. [4] Jer. xii. 4, 7, 10—13.
[5] Ezek. vi. 3, 6, 14.

I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled. Say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel, They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein. Every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished.[1] Hear this, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locusts eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. The field is wasted, the land mourneth, and joy is withered away from the sons of men. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm. And my people shall never be ashamed.[2] The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel. Seek not Bethel; Bethel shall come to nought.[3] Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more. And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste.[4] I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard; and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof."[5]

Numerous and clear as these denunciations are, yet such was the long-suffering patience of God, and such the rebellious spirit of the Israelites of old, that it had

[1] Ezek. vii. 24, xii. 19; Jer. xix. 8.
[2] Joel i. 2—4, 10, 12, ii. 25, 26.
[3] Amos v. 3, 5.
[4] Amos vii. 8, 9.
[5] Micah i. 6.

become a proverb in the land, "the days are prolonged, and every vision faileth." But though that proverb ceased when great calamities did overtake them, and a temporary desolation came over their land, yet the curses denounced against it were not obliterated by a partial and transient fulfilment, but, on the renewed and unrepented wickedness of the people, fell upon them and their land with stricter truth, and, as foretold, with sevenfold severity.

Moses and all the prophets set blessings and curses before the Israelites, with the avowed purpose that they might choose between them. But while the prophetical writings abound with warnings, the scriptural records of Israelitish history show how greatly these warnings were disregarded. The word of God, which is a perfect work, abideth for ever: and it returns not to him void, but fulfils the purpose for which he sent it. And after the statutes and judgments of the Lord had been set before the Israelites for the space of a thousand years from the time that they were first declared, the "burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi," instead of speaking, even then, of repealed judgments, closes the Jewish Scriptures with this last command, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments;"[1] and, affixed to the command to remember these, the very last words of the Old Testament, which seal up the vision and the prophecies, plainly indicate, that however long the God of Israel might bear with the Jews for transgressing the law, while the law only was given them, yet on their refusal to repent when the prophet, who was to be "the messenger of the Lord," would be sent unto *them*, the Lord would come and "smite the earth (or the land) with a curse."

The term of the continuance of these judgments, and of their full completion, is distinctly marked, as commensurate with the dispersion of the Jews, and terminating with their *final* restoration. So long as they be

[1] Mal. iv. 4.

in their enemies' land, their own land lieth desolate. The judgments were not to be removed from it "until the Spirit be poured (upon the Jews) from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field."[1] And the prophecies not only portray Judea while forsaken of the Lord, his heritage left, and given into the hands of its enemies, but they also delineate the character and condition of the dwellers therein, while its ancient inhabitants were to be scattered abroad, and ere the time come when he shall reign in Jerusalem before his ancients gloriously.[2] Annunciations of a future and final restoration, almost uniformly accompany the curses denounced against the land. And frequent, and express as words can be, are the references throughout the prophecies to the period yet to come, when the children of Israel shall be gathered out of all nations, and when the land then, at last and for ever, brought back from desolation, and the cities, repaired after the desolations of many generations, and the mountains of Israel, which have been *always waste*, shall be no more desolate, nor the people termed forsaken any more.[3] After the Messiah was to be cut off, and the sacrifice and oblation to cease, the ensuing *desolations* were to reach *even to the consummation*, and till that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.[4] And Jerusalem, as Jesus hath declared, shall be trodden down of the gentiles, till the times of the gentiles be fulfilled.[5]

Neither the dispersion of the Jews nor the desolation of Judea is to cease, according to the prophecies, till other evidence shall thereby be given of prophetic inspiration. The application to the present period, or to modern times, of the prophecies relative to the desolation of Judea, is thus abundantly manifest. And the more numerous they are, so much the more severe is the test which they abide. And while the Jews are not yet gathered from all the nations nor planted in their own

[1] Isa. xxxii. 15.
[2] Isa. xxiv. 1, 23.
[3] Isa. lxi. 4; Ezek. xxxvi. 8, 10, xxxv. 21, xxxviii. 8; Isa. lxii. 4.
[4] Dan. ix. 27.
[5] Luke xxi. 24.

land to be no more pulled out of it;[1] nor its destroyers and they that laid it waste, gone forth from it;[2] nor the *old waste places* built, nor the *foundations of many generations* raised up, nor the land brought back from desolation,[3]—the effect of every vision is still to be seen, and even now, at this late period of the times of the gentiles, though the blessed consummation may not be very distant, there is abundant evidence to complete the proof that that which was determined has been poured upon the desolate, and that ALL the curses that are written in the book of the Lord have been brought upon the land.[4]

The devastation of Judea is so "astonishing," and its poverty as a country so remarkable, that, forgetful of the prophecies respecting it, and in the rashness of their zeal, infidels have attempted to draw an argument from thence against the truth of Christianity, by denying the possibility of the existence of so numerous a population as can accord with scriptural history, and by representing it as a region singularly unproductive and irreclaimable.[5] But though they have voluntarily aban-

[1] Amos ix. 14, 15.
[2] Isa. xlix. 17.
[3] Isa. lviii. 12.
[4] Deut. xxix. 27.

[5] Voltaire, without adducing any authority whatever in support of his assertion, and without expressly declaring that, in lieu of such evidence, he was gifted with an intuitive knowledge of the historical and geographical fact,—speaks of the ancient state of Palestine with derision, describes it as one of the worst countries of Asia; likens it to Switzerland, and says that it can only be esteemed fertile when compared with the desert. (Bp. Newton.) "La Palestine n'était que ce qu'elle est aujourd'hui, un des plus mauvais pays de l'Asie. Cette petite province," &c. (Œuvres de Voltaire, tom. xxvii. p. 107.) Without citing, on the other hand, the ample evidence of Josephus and of Jerome, both of whom were inhabitants of Judea, and more adequate judges of the fact, the following testimony to the great fertility of that country, not being chargeable with the partiality which might be attached to the opinion either of a Christian or of a Jew, may be given in answer to the groundless assertion of Voltaire; testimony which ought to have been better known and appreciated even by that high priest of modern infidelity, if the sacrifice of truth on the altar of wit had not been too common an act of his devotion to the chief god of his idolatry. "Corpora hominum salubria et ferentia laborum;

doned this indefensible assumption, they have left to the believer the fruits of their concession; they have given the most unsuspicious testimony to the confirmation of the prophecies, and have served to establish the cause which they sought to ruin. The evidence of ancient authors; the fertility of the soil wherever a single spot can be cultivated; the remains of vegetable mould piled, by artificial means, upon the sides of the mountains, which may have clothed them with a richer and more frequent harvest than the most fertile vale; and the multitude of the ruins of cities that now cover the extensive but uncultivated and desert plains, bear witness that there was a numerous and condensed population in a country flowing with food; and that, if any history recorded its greatness, or any prophecies revealed its desolation, they have both been amply verified.

The acknowledgments of Volney, and the description which he gives from personal observation, are sufficient to confute entirely the gratuitous assumptions and insidious sarcasms of Voltaire: and, wonderful as it may appear, copious extracts may be drawn from that writer, whose unwitting or unwilling testimony is as powerful an attestation of the completion of many prophecies, when he relates facts of which he was an eye-witness, as his untried theories, his ideal perfectibility of human nature, if released from the restraints of religion, and his perverted views both of the nature and effects of Christianity, have proved greatly instrumental in subverting the faith of many, who, unguarded by any posi-

rari imbres, *uber solum. Exuberant fruges nostrum ad morem; præterque eas balsamum et palmæ.*—Magna pars Judææ vicis dispergitur; habent et oppida. Hiersolyma genti caput. Illic immensæ opulentiæ templum, et primis munimentis urbs." (Taciti Hist. lib. v. cap. vi. viii. Rel. Pales.) "Ultima Syriarum est Palæstina, per intervalla magna protenta, cultis abundans terris et nitidis, et civitates habens quasdam egregias, nullam sibi cedentem, sed sibi vicissim velut ad perpendiculum æmulas." (Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xiv. cap. viii. § 11, ibid.) "Nec sane viris, opibus, armis quicquam copiosius Syria." (Flori Hist. lib. ii. cap. viii. § 4.) "Syria in hortis operosissima est. Indeque proverbium Græcis, Multa Syrorum olera." (Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. xx. cap. v.)

tive evidence, gave heed to such seductive doctrines. There needs not to be any better witness of facts confirmatory of the prophecies, and in so far conclusive against all his speculations, than Volney himself. Of the natural fertility of the country, and of its abounding population in ancient times, he gives the most decisive evidence. "Syria unites different climates under the same sky, and collects within a small compass pleasures and productions which nature has elsewhere dispersed at great distances of time and place. To this advantage, which perpetuates enjoyments by their succession, it adds another, that of multiplying them by the variety of its productions. . . . . With its numerous advantages of climate and soil, it is not astonishing that Syria should always have been esteemed a most delicious country, and that the Greeks and Romans ranked it among the most beautiful of their provinces, and even thought it not inferior to Egypt."[1] After having assigned several just and sufficient reasons to account for the large population of Judea in ancient times, in contradiction to those who were skeptical of the fact, he adds: "Admitting only what is conformable to experience and nature, there is nothing to contradict the great population of high antiquity. Without appealing to the positive testimony of history, there are innumerable monuments which depose in favour of the fact. Such are the prodigious quantity of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains, at this day deserted. On the remote parts of Carmel are found wild vines and olive trees, which must have been conveyed thither by the hand of man: and in the Lebanon of the Druses and Maronites, the rocks, now abandoned to fir trees and brambles, present us in a thousand places with terraces, which prove that they were anciently better cultivated, and consequently much more populous than in our days."[2]

[1] Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. i. pp. 316, 321 English translation, Lond. 1787.

[2] Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. ii. p. 368.

"Syria," says Gibbon, "one of the countries that have been improved by the most early cultivation, is not unworthy of the preference. The heat of the climate is tempered by the vicinity of the sea and mountains, by the plenty of wood and water; and the produce of a fertile soil affords the subsistence and encourages the propagation of men and animals. From the age of David to that of Heraclius the country was overspread with ancient and flourishing cities; the inhabitants were numerous and wealthy." Such evidence has merely been selected as the most unsuspicious, though that of many others might also be adduced. The country in the *immediate* vicinity of Jerusalem is indeed rocky, as Strabo represents it, and apparently sterile, and is now, in general, perfectly barren: "but even the sides of the most barren mountains in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem had been rendered fertile, by being divided into terraces, like steps rising one above another, where soil has been accumulated with astonishing labour."[1] "In any part of Judea," Dr. Clarke adds, "the effects of a beneficial change of government are soon witnessed, in the conversion of desolated plains into fertile fields. Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest, the salubrity of its air, its limpid springs, its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains, its hills and vales, all these, added to the serenity of the climate, prove this to be indeed a field which the Lord hath blessed."[2] But the facts of the former fertility, as well as of the present desolation of Judea, are established beyond contradiction; and, in attempting in this respect to invalidate the truth of sacred history, infidels have either been driven, or have reluctantly retired, from the defenceless ground which they themselves had once assumed, and have given room whereon to rest an argu-

[1] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 520. General Straton describes these terraces as resembling the *gradus* of a theatre, and particularly marked them as vestiges of ancient "luxuriance."

[2] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 521.

ment against their want of faith as well as of veracity. For, in conclusion of this matter, it surely may, without any infringement of truth or justice, be remarked, that the extent of the present and long-fixed desolation, the very allegation on which they would discredit the scriptural narrative of the ancient glory of Judea, being itself a clearly predicted truth, then the greater the difficulty of reconciling the knowledge of what it was to the fact of what it is, and the greater the difficulty of believing the possibility of so "astonishing" a contrast, the more wonderful are the prophecies which revealed it all, the more completely are they accredited as a voice from heaven, and the argument of the infidel leads the more directly to proof against himself. Such is "the positive testimony of history," and such the subsisting proofs of the former grandeur and fertility of Palestine, that we are now left, without a cavil, to the calm investigation of the change in that country from one extreme to another, and of the consonance of that change with the dictates of prophecy.

Having recently visited the land of Judea, the writer may confidently affirm that it sets before the eyes of every beholder, who knows the Bible, and can exercise his reason, a threefold illustration of the truth of Scripture, in respect to its past, present, and yet destined state. It not only presents to view the scenes of scriptural history, often recognisable to this hour as the places of which the sacred penmen wrote, and where events were transacted, the knowledge of which shall ever be the common property of man; but it exhibits, even among the barren but terraced mountains of Israel, such proofs of ancient cultivation, as show to a demonstration, that the ancient fertility and glory of the land were not inferior to what Scripture represents. Looking on it as it is, the whole land now bears the burden of the word of the Lord. And yet it shows as clearly, whenever that burden shall be removed, and the Lord shall in mercy remember the land, that it yet retains the capability, as if it had never been laid waste, of blooming forth anew in all its beauty,

and bearing its fruits in all their profusion, till its mountains and plains be again clothed with as rich and varied a produce as any land on earth can yield.

To that consummation of all their predictions concerning it, the prophets ever looked. The people that have been scattered throughout the world shall finally be brought back to the land of their fathers, to be no more plucked out of it for ever. And the fruitfulness of the land of Canaan, long dormant, but never dead, shall reappear in its glory, when the wilderness shall be turned into a fruitful field, and there shall be no more desolation. But notwithstanding the blasphemies that have been spoken against the mountains of Israel, no man who has stood in the midst of them could fail to see that they lie desolate as smitten with a curse, and that they shall be desolate no more when that judgment shall be taken away. Many prophetic songs of rejoicing and praise await the time when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, and the terraced mountains of Israel shall be planted anew by the hands of Israel's children, and bear the shame of the heathen no more. *Prophecy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, because they have made you desolate, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and ye are an infamy of the people: therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the words of the Lord God; Thus saith the word of the Lord to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about, &c. Ye, O mountains of Israel, shall yield your fruit to my people Israel. And I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings; neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more; neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more.* Ezek. xxxvi. 1—15. The mockery of misjudging scoffers, and the blasphemies from the lips of talkers, uttered in purposed refutation of the truth of the

word of God, are turned into a testimony against themselves. And while the extent of the predicted desolation shows how wonderful their realization has been, another reversal of the fate of Judea is yet reserved and destined to show, in obvious application to events yet to come, how mercy rejoiceth over judgment; how truth, even in things opposite to each other, when rightly discerned, is ever triumphant; and how the lips of profane talkers, having tendered their testimony, shall be silent for ever, and the mountains of Israel be neither a derision nor a reproach any more.

Under any regular and permanent government, a region so favoured by climate, so diversified in surface, so rich in soil, and which had been so luxuriant for ages, would naturally have resumed its opulence and power; and its permanent desolation, alike contradictory to every suggestion of experience and of reason, must have been altogether inconceivable by man. But *the land was to be overthrown by strangers, to be trodden down; mischief was to come upon mischief, and destruction upon destruction, and the land was to be desolate.* The Chaldeans devastated Judea, and led the inhabitants into temporary captivity. The kings of Syria and Egypt, by their extortions and oppression, impoverished the country. The Romans held it long in subjection to their iron yoke. And the Persians contended for the possession of it. But in succeeding ages, still greater destroyers than any of the former appeared upon the scene to perfect the work of devastation. "In the year 622 (636) the Arabian tribes collected under the banners of Mahomet, seized, or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil wars of the Fatimites and the Ommiades; wrested from the califs by their rebellious governors; taken from them by the Turcoman soldiery; invaded by the European Crusaders; retaken by the Mamelouks of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks."[1] *It has been overthrown by strangers;*

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 357.

trodden under foot: destruction has come upon destruction.

The cities were to be laid waste. By the concurring testimony of all travellers, Judea may now be called a field of ruins. Columns, the memorials of ancient magnificence, now covered with rubbish, and buried under ruins, may be found in all Syria.[1] From Mount Tabor is beheld an immensity of plains, interspersed with hamlets, fortresses, and heaps of ruins. The buildings on that mountain were destroyed and laid waste by the sultan of Egypt in 1290, and the accumulated vestiges of successive forts and ruins are now mingled in one common and extensive desolation.[2] Of the celebrated cities Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gadara, Tarichea, and Chorazin, nothing remains but shapeless ruins.[3] Some vestiges of Emmaus may still be seen. Cana is a very paltry village. The ruins of Tekoa present only the foundations of some considerable buildings.[4] The city of Nain is now a hamlet. The ruins of the ancient Sapphura announce the previous existence of a large city; and its name is still preserved in the appellation of a miserable village called Sephoury.[5] Loudd (the ancient Lydda) and Diospolis appear like a place lately ravaged by fire and sword, and are one continued heap of rubbish and ruins.[6] Ramla, the ancient Arimathea, is in almost as ruinous a state. Nothing but rubbish is to be found within its boundaries. In the adjacent country there are found at every step dry wells, cisterns fallen in, and vast vaulted reservoirs, which prove that in ancient times this town must have been upwards of a league and a half in circumference.[7] Cæsarea can no longer excite the envy of a conqueror, and has long

[1] Mariti's Travels, vol. ii. p. 141.
[2] Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, p. 107; Mariti's Travels, vol. ii. p. 177.
[3] Ibid. Wilson's Travels, p. 227.
[4] Macmichael's Journey to Constantinople, p. 196.
[5] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 401.
[6] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 332—334.
[7] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 334.

been abandoned to silent desolation.[1] The city of Tiberias is now almost abandoned, and its subsistence precarious; of the towns that bordered on its lake there are no traces left.[2] Zabulon, once the rival of Tyre and Sidon, is a heap of ruins. A few shapeless stones, unworthy the attention of the traveller, mark the site of the Saffre.[3] The ruins of Jericho, covering no less than a square mile, are surrounded with complete desolation; and there is not a tree of any description, either of palm or balsam, and scarcely any verdure or bushes to be seen about the site of this abandoned city.[4] Bethel has come to nought. The ruins of Sarepta, and of several large cities in its vicinity, are now "mere rubbish, and are only distinguishable as the sites of towns by heaps of dilapidated stones and fragments of columns."[5] But at Djerash (supposed to be the ruins of Gerasa) are the magnificent remains of a splendid city. The form of streets, once lined with a double row of columns, and covered with pavement still nearly entire, in which are the mark of the chariot wheels, and on each side of which is an elevated pathway; two theatres, and two grand temples, built of marble, and others of inferior note; baths; a bridge; a cemetery, with many sarcophagi, which surrounded the city; a triumphal arch; a large cistern; a picturesque tomb fronted with columns, and an aqueduct overgrown with wood; and upwards of two hundred and thirty columns still standing amidst deserted ruins without a city to adorn: all combine in presenting to the view of the traveller, in the estimation of those who were successively eye-witnesses of them both, "a much finer mass of ruins" than even that of the boasted Palmyra.[6] But how marvellously are the

[1] Captain Light's Travels, p. 204; Buckingham's Travels, p. 126.

[2] Captain Light's Travels, p. 204.

[3] Mariti's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 158—169.

[4] Buckingham's Travels, p. 300.

[5] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 199.

[6] Irby and Mangles's Travels, pp. 317. 318.

The ruins of Djerash were first discovered by Seetzen, in 1806.

predictions of their desolation verified, when, in general, nothing but ruins form the most distinguished remnants of the cities of Israel; and when the multitude of its towns are almost all left, with many a vestige to testify of their number, but without a mark to tell their name.

And your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land: even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths, &c. A single reference to the Mosaic law respecting the Sabbatical year, renders the full import of this prediction perfectly intelligible and obvious. "But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land; thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard." And the land of Judea hath even thus enjoyed its Sabbaths so long as it hath lain desolate. In that country, where every spot was cultivated like a garden by its patrimonial possessor, where every little hill rejoiced in its abundance, where every steep acclivity was terraced by the labour of man, and where the very rocks were covered with thick mould, and rendered fertile; even in that self-same land, with a temperature the same,[1] and with a soil unchanged save only by neglect, a dire contrast is now and has for a lengthened period of time been displayed by fields untilled and unsown, and by waste and desolated plains. Never since the expatriated descendants of Abraham were driven from its borders, has the land of Canaan been so "plenteous in goods," or so abundant in population as once it was; never, as it did for ages unto them, has it vindicated to any other people a right to its possession, or its own title of the land of

They have since been visited by Sheikh Ibrahim (Burckhardt,) Sir William Chatterton, Mr. Bankes, the Hon. Captain Irby, Captain Mangles, Mr. Legh, Mr. Leslie, and Mr. Buckingham. Both Burckhardt and Mr. Buckingham have also given a description of them. Many of the edifices were built long after the period of the prediction; yet they are not excluded from the sentence of desolation.

[1] See Brewster's Philosophical Journal, No. xvi. p. 227.

promise; it has rested from century to century; and while that marked, and stricken, and scattered race, who possess the recorded promise of the God of Israel as their charter to its final and everlasting possession, still "*be in the land of their enemies, so long their land lieth desolate.*" There may thus almost be said to be the semblance of a sympathetic feeling between this bereaved country and banished people, as if the land of Israel felt the miseries of its absent children, awaited their return, and responded to the undying love they bear it, by the refusal to yield to other possessors the rich harvest of those fruits with which, in the days of their allegiance to the Most High, it abundantly blessed *them*. And striking and peculiar, without the shadow of even a semblance upon earth, as is this accordance between the fate of Judea and of the Jews, it assimilates as closely (and, may we not add, as miraculously?) to those predictions respecting both, which Moses uttered and recorded ere the tribes of Israel had ever set a foot in Canaan. *The land shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her rest while she lieth desolate without them.*

To the desolate state of Judea every traveller bears witness. The prophetic malediction was addressed to the mountains and the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys; and the beauty of them all has been blighted. Where the inhabitants once dwelt in peace, each under his own vine, and under his own fig tree, the tyranny of the Turks, and the perpetual incursions of the Arabs, the last of a long list of oppressors, have spread one wide field of almost unmingled desolation. The plain of Esdraelon, naturally most fertile, its soil consisting of "fine, rich, black mould," bounded by Mount Hermon, Carmel, and Mount Tabor,[1] and so extensive as to cover about three hundred square miles, is a solitude,[2] almost entirely deserted; the country is a complete desert.[3] In the valley of Canaan, formerly a beautiful,

[1] General Straton's MS. Travels.
[2] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 497; Maundrell's Travels, p. 95.
[3] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 334, 342.

delicious, and fertile valley, there is not a mark or vestige of cultivation.[1] The country is continually overrun with rebel tribes; the Arabs pasture their cattle upon the spontaneous produce of the rich plains with which it abounds.[2] Every ancient landmark is removed. "The art of cultivation," says Volney, "is in the most deplorable state, and the countryman must sow with the musket in his hand; and no more is sown than is necessary for subsistence." "Every day I found fields abandoned by the plough."[3] In describing his journey through Galilee, Dr. Clarke remarks, that the earth was covered with such a variety of thistles, that a complete collection of them would be a valuable acquisition to botany.[4] Six new species of that plant, so significant of wildness, were discovered by himself in a scanty selection. "From Kane-Leban to Beer, amidst the ruins of cities, the country, as far as the eye of the traveller can reach, presents nothing to his view but naked rocks, mountains, and precipices, at the sight of which pilgrims are astonished, balked in their expectations, and almost startled in their faith."[5] From the centre of the neighbouring elevations (around Jerusalem) is seen a wild, rugged, and mountainous desert; no herds depasturing on the summit, no forests clothing the acclivities, no waters flowing through the valleys; but one rude scene of savage, melancholy waste, in the midst of which the ancient glory of Judea bows her head in widowed desolation."[6] It is needless to multiply quotations to prove the desolation of a country which the Turks have possessed, and which the Arabs have plundered for ages. Enough has been said to prove that *the land mourns and is laid waste, and has become as a desolate wilderness.*

While eye-witnesses in modern times have thus borne ample, uniform, and decisive testimony to the desolation

[1] General Straton's MS.
[2] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 484, 491.
[3] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 413; Volney's Ruins, c. xi. p. 7.
[4] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 451.
[5] Maundrell's Travels, p. 168. Bp. Newton.
[6] Jolliffe's Letters from Palestine, vol. i. p. 104.

of Judea, yet such is the natural fertility of the land, that a temporary respite from predatory assaults, even under the penalty of grievous exactions and oppressive bondage, leads, on the part of the miserable peasantry, to a more extended though not improved cultivation of the lands which environ their miserable villages; and, as described by separate travellers at different times, the same spot may assume a somewhat varied aspect. But the general desolation abides unchanged; every prophetic characteristic remains; and each place, when named, preserves its peculiar prophetic features. About a sixth part of the plain of Sharon, and about a sixteenth of the far larger plain of Esdraelon is scratched by the plough. The cultivation is everywhere wretched. And though an extensive range of ripened grain may in some places present to view, as witnessed by the writer, a seemingly rich prospect, which, on glancing over its golden surface at a distance, the yellow ears overtopping the weeds, gives promise of a rich harvest; yet not a single shock, as in our less fertile soil and far colder clime, falls heavy into the hands of the reaper. For on closer inspection the ranker weeds are but ill concealed; the grain is reduced to less than half of what it seemed: and not unfrequently, whenever the cropped ears of the thin barley have been removed, a field of thistles appears in their stead, covering the ground so closely, that they form the most abundant and seem the only crop.

But specially of the mountains of Israel it may be said, that they have been *always desolate;* and they specially have been a *derision.* At first sight they seem to merit it. They are bleak and bare. Their aspect, as they rise naked from the plain, is that of dreary desolation, if not of irreclaimable barrenness. The marvel is that they should ever have formed a large portion of a glorious land, or that those hills should have rejoiced on every or on any side, on which a solemn stillness and gloomy sadness now universally rest. The Christian or the pilgrim Jew may well ask himself, in doubt, Can these be the mountains of Israel? And the skeptic may

deceitfully think to justify himself in the averment, apparently warranted by pointing to the desolate hills of Judea, if such was the seat of the glory of Solomon, surely the record of that glory is a fable. Assuredly the land has another and opposite aspect and character now from that which it bore, when it was *a good land; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive and honey; a land wherein Israel ate bread without scarceness, and lacked not any thing.* Deut. viii. 7—9. The contrast is so great and dire, that some visible demonstration may be needful to sustain a faltering faith, and refute an apparently rational incredulity. But the unquestioned and unquestionable fact is, as predicted, that the mountains of Israel are *waste* and *desolate.* And the more nearly they are seen, the more manifest is the proof, and the more astonishing is the fact, that so marvellous a desolation has come over them. Approaching their base, the prospect becomes more saddening; and, looking from beneath, nothing in many places but the stony fronts of the empty terraces, successively receding and ascending, is to be seen, desolation having trodden on every step. And the frowning mountains look down on those who pass beneath, as if they angrily responded to the reproaches which have been cast upon them, and uttered forth the judgments which they bear. Still nothing can be more palpably manifest, than that the mountains have been *laid* desolate, and that the time was, when art, and climate, and soil combined their utmost powers to adorn and enrich them as a garden which the Lord had blessed. And with a glance the wonder ceases, how they were of old renowned for beauty and fertility; and the more just astonishment cannot be repressed, how such extensive regions, terraced all over, and ever ready for renewed cultivation, could have lain desolate for so many generations, or how, were the restraining cause removed, they could remain unproductive for a single year. Ascending on the way from Gaza to Jerusalem, between two hills, so as to pass by the lowest level, the writer

counted on one of them sixty-seven successive terraces, perfectly distinct, and in many places complete. The whole scene around, in an extensive view, gave similar demonstration of ancient glory and existing desolation, the extreme contrast rendering each the more astonishing. Mountain after mountain, without exception, is lined throughout, from the base to the summit, with terraces fading only in the distance, all uncovered now but by weeds and creeping thorns, which rise not enough to hide the stony fronts which of old were cut from the rock, or built by man, to clothe the mountains with vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates, and olives, and other fruits, of which, but in isolated spots hid from the general view, not a vestige remains.

Carmel was renowned, even among the mountains of Israel, for its excellency, as denoted by its very name, a fruitful field. Such was its fruitfulness, and so close the thickets on its top, that, as most forcibly indicating the impossibility of the escape of any from the judgments of God, it is said, Though they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will *search* and take them out thence, &c. Amos ix. 2, 3. Yet the same prophet declared, *The top of Carmel shall wither*.[1] And it *is* withered, so that no man could hide himself there: and on looking along its top, a solitary individual may be seen as far as the eye, in an unobstructed view, can reach to discern him. Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits;—but Israel shall yet feed on Carmel and Bashan.

But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return and shall be eaten; as a teil tree and an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves. Though the cities be waste and the land be desolate, it is not from the poverty of the soil that the fields are abandoned by the plough, nor from any diminution of its ancient and natural fertility that the land has rested for so many gene-

[1] Amos i. 2.

rations. Judea was not forced only by artificial means, or from local and temporary causes, into a luxuriant cultivation, such as a barren country might have been, concerning which it would not have needed a prophet to tell, that if once devastated and abandoned it would ultimately and permanently revert into its original sterility. Palestine at all times held a far different rank among the richest countries of the world; and it was not a bleak and sterile portion of the earth, nor a land which even many ages of desolation and neglect could impoverish, that God gave, in possession and by covenant, to the seed of Abraham. No longer cultivated as a garden, but left like a wilderness, Judea is indeed greatly changed from what it was; all that human ingenuity and labour did devise, erect, or cultivate, men have laid waste and desolate; all the "plenteous goods," with which it was enriched, adorned, and blessed, have fallen like seared and withered leaves, when their greenness is gone; and, stripped of its "ancient splendour," it is left as *an oak whose leaf fadeth:* but its inherent sources of fertility are not dried up; the natural richness of the soil is unblighted; *the substance is in it*, strong as that of the teil tree or the solid oak, which retain their substance, when they cast their leaves. And as the leafless oak waits throughout winter for the genial warmth of returning spring, to be clothed with renewed foliage, so the once glorious land of Judea is yet full of latent vigour, or of vegetable power strong as ever, ready to shoot forth, even "better than at the beginning," whenever the sun of heaven shall shine on it again, and the "holy seed" be prepared for being finally "the substance thereof." The *substance that is in it*, which alone has here to be proved, is, in few words, thus described by an enemy: "The land in the plains is *fat and loamy*, and exhibits every sign of the *greatest fecundity*. . . . . Were nature assisted by art, the fruits of the most distant countries might be produced within the distance of twenty leagues."[1] "Galilee," says Malte-Brun, "would

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. i. pp. 308, 317.

be a paradise, were it inhabited by an industrious people, under an enlightened government. Vine-stocks are to be seen here a foot and a half in diameter."[1]

I will give it into the hands of STRANGERS *for a prey, and unto the wicked of the earth for a* SPOIL. *The* ROBBERS *shall enter into it and defile it.* Instead of abiding under a settled and enlightened government, Judea has been the scene of frequent invasions, "which have introduced a succession of foreign nations (des peuples *étrangers*.")[2] "When the Ottomans took Syria from the Mamelouks, they considered it as the *spoil* of a vanquished enemy. According to this law, the life and *property* of the vanquished belong to the conqueror. The government is far from disapproving of a system of *robbery* and plunder which it finds so profitable."[3]

Many PASTORS *have destroyed my vineyard, they have* TRODDEN *my portion under foot.* The ravages committed even by hosts of enemies are in general only temporary; or if an invader settle in a conquered country, on becoming the possessor, he cultivates and defends it. And it is the proper office of government to render life and property secure. In neither case has it fared thus with Judea. But besides successive invasions by foreign nations, and the systematic spoliation exercised by a despotic government, other causes have conspired to perpetuate its desolation, and to render abortive the substance that is in it. Among these has chiefly to be numbered, its being literally *trodden under foot by many pastors.* Volney devotes a chapter, fifty pages in length, to a description, as he entitles it, "of the *pastoral* or *wandering* tribes of Syria," chiefly of the Bedouin Arabs, by whom, especially, Judea is incessantly traversed. "The pashalics of Aleppo and Damascus may be computed to contain about thirty thousand wandering Turkmen (Turcomans.) All their property consists in cattle." In the same pashalics, the number of the Curds "ex-

[1] Schultze, in Pallas, cited by Malte-Brun, Geogr. vol. ii. p. 148
[2] Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 356.
[3] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 370, 381

ceeds twenty thousand tents and huts," or an equal number of armed men. "The Curds are almost everywhere looked upon as robbers. Like the Turkmen, these Curds are *pastors* and *wanderers*.[1] A third wandering people in Syria are the Bedouin Arabs."[2] "It often happens that even individuals, turned *robbers* in order to withdraw themselves from the laws or from tyranny, unite and form a little camp, which maintain themselves by arms, and, increasing, become new hordes and new tribes. We may pronounce, that in cultivable countries the wandering life originates in the injustice or want of policy of the government; and that the sedentary and the cultivating state is that to which mankind is most naturally inclined."[3] "It is evident that agriculture must be very precarious in such a country, and that, under a government like that of the Turks, it is safer to lead a wandering life than to choose a settled habitation, and rely for subsistence on agriculture."[4] "The Turkmen, the Curds, and the Bedouins, have no *fixed habitations*, but keep *perpetually wandering* with their tents and *herds*, in limited districts, of which they look upon themselves as the proprietors. The Arabs spread over the whole frontier of Syria, and even the plains of Palestine."[5]—Thus, contrary to their natural inclination, the peasants, often forced to abandon a settled life, and pastoral tribes in great numbers, or *many*, and without fixed habitations, divide the country, as it were by mutual consent, and apportion it in limited districts among themselves by an assumed right of property; and the Arabs, subdivided also into different tribes, spread over the plains of Palestine, "wandering perpetually," as if on very purpose to *tread it down*.—What could be more unlikely or unnatural in such a land! yet what more striking and strictly true! or how else could the effect of the vision have been seen! "Many *pastors* have destroyed my vineyard; they have *trodden* my portion *under foot*."

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. 370, i. 4, 5. [2] Ibid. i. 377.
[3] Ibid. ii. 383. [4] Ibid. ii. 387. [5] Ibid. ii. 367, 368.

Ye shall be as a garden that hath no water. How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every FIELD *wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein?*—"In all hot countries, wherever there is water, vegetation may be perpetually maintained and made to produce an uninterrupted succession of fruits to flowers, and flowers to fruit."[1] "The remains of cisterns are to be found, (throughout Judea,) in which they collected the rain-water; and *traces* of the canals by which those waters were distributed on the *fields*.—These labours necessarily created a prodigious fertility under an ardent sun, where a little water was the only requisite to revive the vegetable world."[2] Such labours, with very slight exceptions, are now unknown. Judea is as a garden that hath no water, and the herbs of every field wither. "We see there *none* of that gay carpeting of *grass and flowers* which decorate the meadows of Normandy and Flanders, nor those clumps of beautiful trees which give such richness and animation to the landscapes of Burgundy and Brittany.—The land of Syria has almost always *a dusty appearance*.[3] Had not these countries been *ravaged by the hand* of *man*, they might perhaps at this day have been shaded with forests. That its productions do not correspond with its natural advantages, is less owing to its physical than political state."[4] "The whole of the mountain (near Tiberias) is covered with *dry* grass."[5]

The forts and TOWERS *shall be for* DENS *for ever.* At every step we meet with ruins of *towers*, dungeons, and castles with fosses—frequently *inhabited by jackals, owls, and scorpions*."[6]

The multitude of the city shall be left. The defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation FORSAKEN. There are a "prodigious quantity of ruins dispersed over the

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 359.
[2] Malte-Brun's Geo. vol. ii. pp. 150, 151.
[3] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 359.
[4] Ibid. pp. 359, 360.
[5] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 331.
[6] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 336.

plains, and even in the mountains, at this day *deserted.*"[1]

There shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down and consume the branches thereof. A PASTURE *of flocks. There shall the* LAMBS *feed after their manner, and the waste place of the fat ones shall strangers eat.* Josephus describes Galilee, of which he was the governor, as "full of plantations of trees of all sorts, the soil universally rich and fruitful, and all, without the exception of a single part, cultivated by the inhabitants. Moreover," he adds, "the cities lie here very thick, and there are very many villages, which are so full of people by the richness of their soil, that the very least of them contained above fifteen thousand inhabitants."[2] Such was Galilee, at the commencement of the Christian era, several centuries after the prophecy was delivered; but now, "the plain of Esdraelon, and all the other parts of Galilee which afford *pasture*, are occupied by Arab tribes, around whose brown tents the sheep and *lambs* gambol to the sound of the reed, which at night-fall calls them home."[3] The calf feeds and lies down amidst the ruins of the cities, and consumes, without hinderance, the branches of the trees; and however changed may be the condition of the inhabitants, the *lambs feed after their manner*, and, while the land mourns, and the merry-hearted sigh, they gambol to the sound of the reed.

The precise and complete contrast between the ancient and existing state of Palestine, as separately described by Jewish and Roman historians and by modern travellers, is so strikingly exemplified in their opposite descriptions, that in reference to whatever constituted the beauty and the glory of the country, or the happiness of the people, an entire change is manifest, even in minute circumstances. The universal richness and fruitfulness of the soil of Galilee, together with its being

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 368.
[2] Josephus's Wars, book iii. chap. iii. § 2.
[3] Schulze, quoted by Malte-Brun, vol. ii. p. 148.

"full of plantations of all sorts of trees," are represented by Josephus as "inviting the most slothful to take pains in its cultivation." And the other provinces of the Holy Land are also described by him as having "abundance of trees, full of autumnal fruit, both that which grows wild and that which is the effect of cultivation."[1] Tacitus relates, that, besides all the fruits of Italy, the palm and balsam tree flourished in the fertile soil of Judea. And he records the great carefulness with which, when the circulation of the juices seemed to call for it, they gently made an incision in the branches of the balsam, with a shell or pointed stone, not venturing to apply a knife.[2] No sign of such art or care is now to be seen throughout the land. The balm tree has disappeared where it long flourished; and hardier plants have perished from other causes than the want of due care in their cultivation. And instead of relating how the growth of a delicate tree is promoted, and the medicinal liquor, at the same time, extracted from its branches, by a nicety or perfectness of art worthy of the notice of a Tacitus, a different task has fallen to the lot of the traveller from a far land, who describes the customs of those who now dwell where such arts were practised. "The olive trees (near Arimathea) are daily perishing through age, the *ravages* of contending factions, and even *from secret mischief*. The Mamelouks having cut down all the olive trees, for the pleasure they take in destroying, or to make *fires*, Yafa hast lost its greatest convenience."[3] Instead of "abundance of trees being still the effect of cultivation," such, on the other hand, has been the effect of these ravages, that many places in Palestine are now "absolutely destitute of fuel." Yet in this devastation, and in all its progress, may be read the literal fulfilment of the prophecy, which not only described the desolate cities of Judea as a pasture of flocks, and as places for the calf to feed and lie down,

[1] Josephus's Wars, book iii. chap. iii. § 4.
[2] Taciti Hist. lib. v. cap. vi.
[3] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 332, 333.

and consume the branches thereof; but which, with equal truth, also declared, *when the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off; the women come and set them on fire.*

For it is a people of NO *understanding.* "The most simple arts are in a state of barbarism. The sciences are *totally* unknown."[1]

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers. "The earth produces only *briers* and wormwood."[2] A thorny shrub, (Merar,) and others of a similar kind, abound throughout the desolated plains and hills of Palestine. Some of the latter are so closely beset, in many places, with thorns, that they can be ascended only with great difficulty: and "the whole district of Tiberias is covered with a thorny shrub."[3]

Your highways shall be desolate.[4] *The highways lie waste; the wayfaring man ceaseth.*[5] So great must have been the intercourse, in ancient times, between the populous and numerous cities of Judea, and so much must that intercourse have been increased by the frequent and regular journeyings, from every quarter, of multitudes going up to Jerusalem to worship, in observance of the rites, and in obedience to the precepts of their law, that scarcely any country ever possessed such means of crowded highways, or any similar reason for abounding so much in wayfaring men. In the days of Isaiah, who uttered the latest of these predictions, "the land was full of horses, neither was there any end of their chariots." And there not only subsist to this day, in the land of Judea, numerous remains of paved ways formed by the Romans at a much later period, and "others evidently *not* Roman;"[6] but among the precious literary remains of antiquity which have come down to our times, three Roman itineraries are to be numbered, that can here be confidently appealed to.

[1] Volney's Travels, p. 442.
[2] Volney's Ruins, p. 9.
[3] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 333.
[4] Levit. xxvi. 22.
[5] Isa. xxxiii. 8.
[6] General Straton's MS.

From these, and from the testimony of Arrian and Diodorus Siculus, as well as of Josephus and Eusebius, it appears, as Reland has clearly shown, that in Palestine, long after it came under the power of the Romans, and after it was greatly debased from its ancient glory, there were forty-two different highways, (viæ publicæ,) all being distinctly specified, which intersected it in various directions; and the number of miles exceeding eight hundred and eighty.[1] Yet the prophecy is literally true. "In the interior part of the country, there are neither great roads, nor canals, nor even bridges over the greatest part of the rivers and torrents, however necessary they may be in winter. Between town and town there are neither posts nor public conveyances. Nobody travels alone, from the insecurity of the roads. One must wait for several travellers who are going to the same place, or take advantage of the passage of some great man who assumes the office of protector, but is more frequently the oppressor of the caravan. The roads in the mountains are extremely bad; and the inhabitants are so far from levelling them, that they endeavour to make them more rugged, in order, as they say, to cure the Turks of their desire to introduce their cavalry. It is remarkable that there is not a wagon or cart in all Syria."[2] "There are," continues Volney, "no inns anywhere. The lodgings in the khans (or places of reception for travellers) are cells where you find nothing but bare walls, dust, and sometimes scorpions. The keeper of the khan gives the traveller the key and the mat, and he provides himself the rest. He must therefore carry with him his bed, his kitchen utensils, and even his provisions; for frequently not even bread is to be found in the villages."[3] "There are no carriages in the country," says another traveller, "under any denomination." "Among the hills of Palestine,"[4]

[1] Relandi Palæstina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata, tom. i. lib. ii. cap. iii. iv. v. pp. 405, 425.

[2] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 417, 419.

[3] Ibid. pp. 417, 418, 419.

[4] Wilson's Travels, p. 100.

according to a third witness, "the road is impassable; and the traveller finds himself among a set of infamous and ignorant thieves, who would cut his throat for a farthing, and rob him of his money for the mere pleasure of doing it."[1] In a country where there is a total want of wheel-carriages of every description, *the highways*, however excellent and numerous they once might have been, must *lie waste;* and where such dangers have to be encountered at every step, and such privations at every stage, it is not now to be wondered that the *wayfaring man ceaseth.* But let the disciples of Volney tell by what dictates of human wisdom the whole of his description of these existing facts was summed up, in a brief sentence, by Moses and Isaiah; by the former, thirty-three, and, by the latter, twenty-five centuries past.

I will send wild beasts among you which shall devour your cattle![2] *I will make you waste; and I will send upon you evil beasts*, &c.[3] Palestine, to this day, is overrun by wild beasts. Hyenas, lynxes, wild boars, bears, foxes, wolves, and jackals abound both in the mountains and plains. After sunset the Bedouin fires, especially in the south, where flocks abound, are seen blazing at various distances over the face of the country, in order to save the cattle, gathered together, from being devoured by the wild beasts. Sleeping in a tent at Naplose, the author was wakened by the howling of wild beasts, and the responding and mingled barking of dogs. On the sea-shore, at the foot of Carmel, two lynxes were seen late at night at the door of an adjoining tent. And though detached from the other mountains of Judea, and situated on the sea-side, Carmel is still, as it has long been, "a habitation of wild beasts."[4] The writer was there informed by Lord Rokeby, that one of his servants had seen many hyenas at Jenin, of which he counted sixteen; and another stated the number was

[1] Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 225.
[2] Deut. xxvi. 22.
[3] Ezek. v. 17.
[4] Mariti's Travels, vol. ii. p. 140.

immense. And, at the same time, Lord Claude Hamilton stated, that on the plain of Jericho and the banks of the Jordan he had seen wild boars and innumerable traces of them. Even in the daytime, the wolf, the fox, the jackal, or the hyena, is occasionally seen (as may here be personally testified) by the passing traveller. The Lord hath not yet returned to visit the vineyard which his own right hand did plant; and of the land of Judea, which he gave to the seed of Abraham by an everlasting covenant, it may literally be said, *The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.* But, looking beyond the time of these grievous desolations, the promise stands sure. "I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." But to this day the prophetic denunciation retains its undiminished as unrepealed power.

The spoilers shall come upon all high places through the wilderness. The robbers shall enter into it, &c. The land of Israel has not only been given into the hands of strangers for a prey, and unto the wicked of the earth for a spoil, as foreign nations have successively subjugated and despoiled it; but it has also been the prey of bordering marauders, to whose assaults, till recently and partially checked by the pasha of Egypt, it has for ages been exposed. "These precautions, on the part of travellers, are above all necessary in the countries exposed to the Arabs, such as Palestine and the whole frontier of the desert."[1] The spoilers shall come from *all* high places through *the wilderness*, said the prophet. Precautions against robbers are above all necessary, along the *whole* frontier of the *desert*, says Volney. "The Arabs are plunderers of the cultivated lands, and robbers on the high-roads. On the slightest alarm the Arabs cut down their (the peasants') harvests, seize their flocks, &c. The peasants with good

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 417.

cause call them thieves. The Arab makes his incursions against hostile tribes, or seeks plunder in the country or on the highways. He became a robber from greediness, and such is in fact his present character. A plunderer rather than a warrior, the Arab attacks only to despoil.[1] Such is the systematic spoliation and robbery to which the inhabitants of Palestine were subjected for ages.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein. "In the great cities" (in Syria, none of which are in the Holy Land,) "the people have much of that dissipated and careless air which they usually have with us, because there, as well as here," says Volney, alluding to France, "inured to suffering from habit, and devoid of reflection from ignorance, they enjoy a kind of security. Having nothing to lose, they are in no dread of being plundered. The merchant, on the contrary, lives in a state of perpetual alarm, under the double apprehension of acquiring no more, and losing what he possesses. He trembles lest he should attract the attention of rapacious authority, which would consider an air of satisfaction as a proof of opulence and the signal for extortion. The same dread prevails throughout the villages, where every peasant is afraid of exciting the envy of his equals, and the avarice of the Aga and his soldiers. In such a country, where the subject is perpetually watched by a despoiling government, he must assume a serious countenance for the same reason that he wears ragged clothes;"[2] or, as the description might appropriately have been concluded, in the very words of the prophet, "because of the violence of them that dwell therein."

They shall be ashamed of your revenues. "From the state of the contributions of each pashalic, it appears that

[1] Volney's Travels, chap. xxiii.
[2] Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 477, 478.

the annual sum paid by Syria into the Kasna, or treasury of the Sultan, amounts to 2345 purses; viz.

For Aleppo	800 purses.
Tripoli	750
Damascus	45
Acre	750
Palestine	—
	2345 purses;

which are equal to 2,931,250 livres, or £122,135 sterling." After the specification of some incidental sources of revenue, it is added, "we cannot be far from the truth, if we compute the total of the sultan's revenue from Syria to be 7,500,000 livres," (£312,500 sterling,)[1] or less than the third part of one million sterling, and less than a seventh part of what it yielded, in tribute, unto Egypt, long after the prophecies were sealed. This is the whole amount that a government which has reached the acme of despotism, and which accounts pillage a right, and all property its own, can extort from impoverished Syria. But, insignificant as this sum is, as the revenues of those extensive territories which included in ancient times several opulent and powerful states, the greater part must be deducted from it, before estimating the pitiful pittance, which, under the name of revenue, its oppressive masters can now drain from the land of Israel. A single glance at the preceding statement affords the obvious means of distinguishing the comparative desolation and poverty of the different provinces of Syria. And the least unproductive of these in revenue, the pashalics of Aleppo and Tripoli, and a considerable portion of what now forms the pashalic of Acre, were not included within the boundaries of ancient Judea. Palestine, containing the ancient territory of Philistia, and part of Judea, was then gifted in whole, by the sultan, to two individuals. The very extensive pashalic of Damascus, so unproductive of revenue, includes Jerusalem, and a great proportion of ancient Judea; so

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 360.

that of it, even with greater propriety than of the rest, it may be said, *they shall be ashamed of your revenues.*

Instead of viewing separately each special prediction, the prophecies respecting the desolation of the land of Judea are so abundant, that several may be grouped together; and their meaning is so clear, that any explanatory remarks would be superfluous. Nor is the evidence of their complete fulfilment indistinct, or difficult to be found; for Volney illustrates six predictions in a single sentence, to which he subjoins a reflection, not less confirmatory than the whole of prophetic inspiration.

"*I will destroy your high places, and bring your* SANCTUARIES *into desolation. The* PALACES *shall be forsaken. I will destroy the remnant of the sea-coast. I will make your cities waste. The multitude of the city shall be left, the habitation forsaken*, &c. *The land shall be utterly spoiled. I will make the land more desolate than the wilderness.* "The *temples* are thrown down—the *palaces* demolished—the *ports* filled up—the *towns* destroyed—and the earth, *stripped of inhabitants*, seems a *dreary burying-place.*"[1]

"Good God!" exclaims Volney, "from whence proceed such melancholy revolutions? For what cause is the fortune of these countries so *strikingly changed*? Why are so many cities destroyed? Why is not that ancient population reproduced and perpetuated?" "I wandered over the country; I traversed the provinces; I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria. This Syria, SAID *I to myself*, now almost depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. What is become of so many productions of the hands of man? What is become of those ages of abundance and of life?" &c. Seeking to be wise, men become fools, when they trust to their own vain imaginations, and will not look to that word of God, which is as able to confound the wise as to give understanding to the simple. These words, from the lips of a great

[1] Volney's Ruins, ch. xi. p. 8.

advocate of infidelity, proclaim the certainty of the truth which he was too blind or bigoted to see. For not more unintentionally or unconsciously do *many* illiterate Arab *pastors*, or herdsmen, verify one prediction, while they literally *tread* Palestine *under foot*, than Volney, the academician, himself verifies another, while, speaking in his own name, and the spokesman also of others, he thus confirms the unerring truth of God's holy word, by what he *said*, as well as by describing what he saw. "*The generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and* THE STRANGER THAT SHALL COME FROM A FAR LAND, *shall* SAY, *when they see the plagues of that land, and the sickness which the Lord hath laid upon it, Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?*

It is no "secret malediction," spoken of by Volney, which God has pronounced against Judea. It is the curse of a broken covenant that rests upon the land—the consequences of the iniquities of the people, not of those only who have been plucked from off it, and scattered throughout the world, but of those also that dwell therein. The ruins of empires originated not from the regard which mortals paid to revealed religion, but from causes diametrically the reverse. Neither Jews nor Christians who possessed a revelation were the desolators; under them Judea flourished. The destruction of Jerusalem, and of the cities of Palestine, was the work of the Romans, who were pagan idolaters; and the devastation, in more recent ages, was perpetuated by the Saracens and Turks, believers in the impostor Mahomet, and the desolations were wrought by the enemies of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. The desolations are not of divine appointment, but only as they have followed the violations of the laws of God, or have arisen from thence. The virtual renunciation of a holy faith brought on destruction. And none other curses have come upon the land than those that are written in the book. The character and condition of the people are not less definitely marked than the features of the land that has

been smitten with a curse because of their iniquities And when the unbeliever asks, Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the land, the same word which foretold that the question would be put, supplies an answer, and assigns the cause. *Then shall men say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers*, &c.

The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant: therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, &c. These expressive words, while they declare the cause of the judgments and desolations, denote also the great depravity of those who were to inhabit the land of Judea during the time of its desolation, and while its ancient inhabitants were to be "scattered abroad." And although the ignorance of those who dwell therein may be pitied, their degeneracy will not be denied. The ferocity of the Turks, the predatory habits of the Arabs, the abject state of the few poor Jews who are suffered to dwell in the land of their fathers, the base superstitions of the different Christian sects,—the frequent contentions that subsist among such a mingled and diversified people, and the gross ignorance and great depravity that prevail throughout the whole, have all sadly changed and stained the moral aspect of that country which, from sacred remembrances, is denominated the Holy Land,—have converted that region, where alone in all the world, and during many ages, the only living and true God was worshipped, and where alone the pattern of perfect virtue was ever exhibited to human view or in the human form, into one of the most degraded countries of the globe, and, in appropriate terms, may well be said to have *defiled the land*. And it has been defiled throughout many an age. The Father of mercies afflicteth not willingly, nor grieves the children of men. Sin is ever the precursor of the actual judgments of Heaven. It was on account of their idolatry and wickedness that the ten tribes were earliest plucked from off the land of Israel. The blood of Jesus,

according to their prayer, and the full measure of their iniquity, according to their doings, was upon the Jews and upon their children. Before they were extirpated from that land which their iniquities had defiled, it was drenched with the blood of more than a million of their race. Judea afterwards had a partial and temporary respite from desolation, when Christian churches were established there. But in that land, the nursery of Christianity, the seeds of its corruption, or perversion, began soon to appear. The moral power of religion decayed, the worship of images prevailed, and the nominal disciples of a pure faith "broke the everlasting covenant."[1] The doctrine of Mahomet—the Koran or the sword—was the scourge and the cure of idolatry; but all the native impurities of the Mahometan creed succeeded to a grossly corrupted form of Christianity. Since that period, hordes of Saracens, Egyptians, Fatimites, Tartars, Mamelukes, Turks, (a combination of names of unmatched barbarism, at least in modern times,) have, for the space of twelve hundred years, *defiled the land* of the children of Israel with iniquity and with blood. And in very truth the prophecy savours not in the least of hyperbole,—*the worst of the heathen shall possess their houses. And the holy places shall be defiled.* "After the final destruction," in the words of Gibbon, "of the stately temple of the Jewish nation by the arms of Titus and Hadrian, a ploughshare was drawn over the consecrated ground, as a sign of perpetual interdiction. Sion was deserted; and the vacant space of the lower city was filled with the public and private edifices of the Ælian colony, which spread themselves over the adjacent hill of Calvary. *The holy places were polluted with the monuments of idolatry;* and either by design or accident, a chapel was dedicated to Venus, on the spot which had been sanctified by the death and resurrection of Christ."[2] Omar, on the first conquest of Jerusalem by the Mahometans, erected a mosque on the site of the temple of Solomon; and, jealous as the God of Israel is that his

[1] Isaiah xxiv. 5. [2] Gibbon's Hist. vol. iv. p 100, c. 23.

glory be not given to another, the unseemly and violent and bloody contentions among Christian sects around the very sepulchre of the Author of the faith which they dishonour, bear not a feebler testimony in the present day, than the preceding fact bore, at so remote a period, to the truth of this prediction. The frenzied zeal of crusading Christians could not rescue the sepulchre of Christ from the heathen who defiled it, though Europe then poured like a torrent upon Asia. But the defilement of the land, no less than that of the holy places, is not yet cleansed away. And Judea is still defiled to this hour, not only by oppressive rulers, but by an unprincipled and a lawless people. "The barbarism of Syria," says Volney, "is complete."[1] "I have often reflected," says Burckhardt, in describing the dishonest conduct of a Greek priest in the Hauran, (but in words that admit of too general an application,) "that if the English penal laws were suddenly promulgated in this country, there is scarcely any man in business, or who has money dealings with others, who would not be liable to transportation before the end of the first six months."[2] "Under the name of Christianity, every degrading superstition and profane rite, equally remote from the enlightened tenets of the gospel and the dignity of human nature, are professed and tolerated. The pure gospel of Christ, everywhere the herald of civilization and of science, is almost as little known in the Holy Land as in California or New Holland. A series of legendary traditions, mingled with remains of Judaism, and the wretched phantasies of illiterate ascetics, may now and then exhibit a glimmering of heavenly light; but if we seek for the effects of Christianity in the land of Canaan, we must look for that period, when the desert shall blossom as the rose, and the wilderness become a fruitful field."[3] *The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances,*

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 442.
[2] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 89.
[3] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 405.

broken the everlasting covenant: therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and

They that dwell therein are desolate. "The government of the Turks in Syria is a pure military despotism, that is, the bulk of the inhabitants are subject to the caprices of a faction of armed men, who dispose of every thing according to their interest and fancy." "In each government the pasha is an absolute despot. In the villages, the inhabitants, limited to the mere necessaries of life, have no arts but those without which they cannot subsist." "There is no safety without the towns, nor security within their precincts;"[1] and

Few men left. While their character is thus depraved and their condition miserable, their number is also small indeed, as the inhabitants of so extensive and fertile a region. After estimating the number of inhabitants in Syria, in general, Volney remarks: "So feeble a population in so excellent a country may well excite *our astonishment;* but this will be increased, if we compare the present number of inhabitants with that of ancient times. We are informed by the philosophical geographer, Strabo, that the territories of Yamnia and Yoppa, in Palestine alone, were formerly so populous as to bring forty thousand armed men into the field. At present they could scarcely furnish three thousand. From the accounts we have of Judea in the time of Titus, which are to be esteemed tolerably accurate, that country must have contained four millions of inhabitants. If we go still further back into antiquity, we shall find the same populousness among the Philistines, the Phœnicians, and in the kingdoms of Samaria and Damascus."[2] Though the ancient population of the land of Israel be estimated at the lowest computation, and the existing population be rated at the highest, yet that country does not now contain above a tenth part of the number of inhabitants which it plentifully supported, exclusively from their industry and from the rich resources of its own

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 370, 376, 380.
[2] Ibid. p. 366.

luxuriant soil, for many successive centuries; and how could it possibly have been imagined that this identical land would ever yield so scanty a subsistence to the desolate dwellers therein, and that there would be so *few men left?*

Yet in it shall be a tenth. The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went out by an hundred shall leave ten. The present population of Judea has been estimated, without reference to any prediction, at a *tenth* of the number by which it was peopled previous to the dispersion of the Jews. Volney, on a comparative estimate, reduces it even to less. It is impossible to ascertain the precise proportion. The words of Pierre Bello, quoted by Malte-Brun, though the same in substance with the testimony of others, here afford the closest commentary. "A tract from which a *hundred* individuals draw a scanty subsistence formerly maintained *thousands.*"[1]

The mirth of the tabret ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. Instrumental music was common among the Jews. The tabret, and the harp, the cymbal, the psaltery, and the viol, and other instruments of music, are often mentioned as in familiar use among the Israelites, and regularly formed a great part of the service of the temple. At the period when the prediction was delivered, the harp, the viol, and the tabret, and pipe, and wine were in their feasts; and even though the Jews have long ceased to be a nation, the use of these instruments has not ceased from among them. But in the once happy land of Judea, the voice of mirthful music is at rest. In a general description of the state of the arts and sciences in Syria, including the whole of the Holy Land, Volney remarks, that adepts in music are very rarely to be met with. "They have no music but vocal; for they neither know nor esteem *instrumental;* and they are in the right, for such instruments as they have, not excepting their flutes, are

[1] Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. ii. p. 151.

detestable."[1] *The mirth of the tabret ceaseth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.*

But this is not the sole instance in which the melancholy features of that desolate country seem to be transferred to the minds of its inhabitants. And the plaintive language of the prophet (the significancy of which might well have admitted of some slight modification, if one jot or tittle could pass away till all be fulfilled,) is true to the very letter, when set side by side, unaided by one syllable of comment, with the words of a bold and avowed unbeliever.

All the merry-hearted do SIGH; *they shall not drink wine with a song; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. Their shouting shall be no shouting.* "Their performance" (singing) "is accompanied with sighs and gestures. They may be said to excel most in the *melancholy* strain. To behold an Arab with his head inclined, his hand applied to his ear, his eyebrows knit, his eyes languishing; to hear his plaintive tones, his *sighs* and sobs, it is almost impossible to refrain from tears."[2] If any further illustration of the prediction be requisite, the same ill-fated narrator of facts exhibits anew the visions of the prophet. From his description (chap. xl.) of the manner and character of the inhabitants of Syria, it is obvious that melancholy is a predominating feature. "Instead of that open and cheerful countenance, which we either naturally possess or assume, their behaviour is serious, austere, and melancholy. They rarely laugh; and the gaiety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. When they speak, it is with deliberation, without gesture, and without passion; they listen without interrupting you; they are silent for whole days together: and by no means pique themselves on supporting conversation. Continually seated, they pass whole days musing, with their legs crossed, their pipes in their mouths, and almost without changing their attitude. The orientals, in gene-

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 439.
[2] Ibid. pp. 439, 440.

ral, have a grave and phlegmatic exterior; a staid and almost listless deportment; and a serious, nay, even sad and melancholy countenance."[1] Having thus explicitly stated the fact, Volney, by many arguments, equally judicious and just, most successfully combats the idea that the climate and soil are the radical cause of so striking a phenomenon; and, after assigning a multiplicity of facts from ancient history which completely disprove the efficacy of such causes, he instances that of the Jews, "who, limited to a little state, never ceased to struggle for a thousand years against the most powerful empires.[2] If the men of these nations were inert," he adds, "what is activity? If they were active, where then is the influence of climate? Why, in the same countries where so much energy was displayed in former times, do we at present find such profound indolence?" And, having thus relieved the advocate for the inspiration of the Scriptures from the necessity of proving that the contrast in the manner and character of the present and of the ancient inhabitants of Syria is (even now, when the change is become matter of history and observation, and when the circumstances respecting it are known) incapable of solution from any natural causes, such as by some conceivable possibility might have been foreseen, he proceeds to point out those real, efficacious, and efficient causes, viz., the mode of government, and the state of religion and of the laws, the nature of which no human sagacity could possibly have descried, and which came not into existence or operation in the manner in which they have so long continued, for many ages subsequent to the period when their full and permanent effect was laid open to the full view of the prophets of Israel. The fact, thus clearly predicted and proved, is not only astonishing as referable to the inhabitants of Judea, and as exhibiting a contrast, than which nothing, of a similar kind, can be more complete; but it is so very contradictory to the habits of men and the customs

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 461, 476.
[2] Ibid. p. 464.

of nations, that it is totally inexplicable how, by any human means, such a fact, even singly, could ever have been foretold. From the congregated groups of savages, cheered by their simple instruments of music, exulting in their war-songs, and revelling in their mirth, to the more elegant assemblages of polished society, listening with delight to the triumphs of music; from the huts of the wilderness to the courts of Asia and of Europe; and from the wilds of America, the jungles of India, and even the deserts of central Africa, to the meadows of England, the plains of France, or the valleys of Italy; the experience of mankind in every clime—except partially where the blasting influence of the crescent is felt—proclaims, as untrue to nature, the predicted fact, which actually has been permanently characteristic of the inhabitants of the once happy land of Israel. The fact perhaps would have been but slowly credited, and the synonymous terms of the ample description and of the repeated prophecies might have been reckoned the fiction of a biassed judgment, had a Christian, instead of Volney, been the witness.

They shall not drink wine with a song. Strong drink shall be BITTER *unto them that drink it.* The more closely that the author of the *Ruins of Empires* traces the causes in which the desolation of these regions, and the calamities of the inhabitants, originate, he supplies more abundant data for a demonstration that the prophecies respecting them cannot but be divine. "One of the chief sources," continues Volney, "of gaiety with us, is the social intercourse of the table, and the use of wine. The orientals (Syrians) are almost strangers to this double enjoyment. Good cheer would infallibly expose them to extortion, and wine to corporeal punishment, from the zeal of the police in enforcing the precepts of the Koran. It is with great reluctance the Mahometans tolerate the Christians the use of a liquor they envy them."[1] To this statement may be subjoined the more direct, but equally unapplied, testimony of

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 480.

recent travellers. "The wines of Jerusalem," says Mr Joliffe, "are most execrable. In a country where every species of vinous liquor is strictly prohibited by the concurrent authorities of law and gospel, a single fountain may be considered of infinitely greater value than many wine-presses."[1] Mr. Wilson relates, that the wine drunk in Jerusalem is probably the very worst to be met with in any country.[2] While the intolerance and despotism of the Turks, and the rapacity and wildness of the Arabs, have blighted the produce of Judea, and render abortive all the influence of climate, and all the fertility of that land of vines, the unnatural prohibition of the use of wine, and the rigour with which that prohibition is enforced, have peculiarly operated against the cultivation of the vine, and turned the treading of the wine-press into an odious and unprofitable task. Yet in a country where the vine grows spontaneously, and which was celebrated for the excellence of its wines,[3] nothing less than the operation of causes unnatural and extreme as these, could have verified the language of prophecy. But in this instance, as truly as in every other, a recapitulation of the prophecies is the best summary of the facts. And, by only changing the future into the present and the past, after an interval of two thousand five hundred years, no eye-witness, writing on the spot, could delineate a more accurate representation of the existing state of Judea, than in the very words of Isaiah, in which, as in those of other prophets, the various and desultory observations of travellers are concentrated into a description equally perspicuous and true.

"Many days and years shall ye be troubled; for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in

[1] Joliffe's Letters from Palestine, vol. i. p. 184.
[2] Wilson's Travels, p. 130.
[3] Relandi Palæstina, pp. 381, 792.

the joyous city: because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.[1] The highways lie waste; the wayfaring man ceaseth. The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed or hewn down, or withered away; Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.[2] The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled. The earth mourneth and fadeth away; —it is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate,—and few men left. The vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down;—all joy is darkened; the mirth of the land is gone."[3]

To this picture of common and general devastation, that no distinguishing feature might be left untouched or untraced by his pencil, the prophet adds: "When thus it shall be in the midst of the land, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning-grapes when the vintage is done.[4] The glory of Jacob shall be made thin; and it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm: yet gleaning-grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof."[5] These words imply, as otherwise declared without a metaphor, that a small remnant would be left; that though Judea should become poor like a field that has been reaped, or like a vine stripped of its fruits, its desolation would not be so complete but that some vestige of its former abundance would be still visible, like the few grains that are left by the reaper when

[1] Isa. xxxii. 10, 12—14. [2] Isa. xxxiii. 8, 9.
[3] Isa. xxiv. 3—11. [4] Isa. xxiv. 13. [5] Isa. xvii. 4—6.

the harvest is past, or the little remaining fruit that hangs on the uppermost branch, or on a neglected bough, after the full crop has been gathered, and the vine and the olive have been shaken. And is there yet a gleaning left of all the glory of Israel? There is; and there could not be any simile more natural or more expressive of the fact. Napolose (the ancient Sychar or Sichem) is luxuriantly embosomed in the most delightful and fragrant bowers, half-concealed by rich gardens and by stately trees, collected into groves all around the beautiful valley in which it stands.[1] The garden of Geddin, situated on the borders of Mount Sharon, and protected by its chief, extends several miles in a spacious valley, abounding with excellent fruits, such as olives, almonds, peaches, apricots and figs. A number of streams that fall from the mountains, traverse it, and water the cotton plants that thrive well in this fertile soil.[2] The scenery in the plain of Zabulon is, to the full, as delightful as in the rich vale upon the south of the Crimea;—it reminds the traveller of the finest part of Kent and Surrey.[3] The soil, although stony, is exceedingly rich, but now entirely neglected. But the delightful vale of Zabulon appears everywhere covered with spontaneous vegetation, flourishing in the wildest exuberance. Even along the mountains of Gilead, the land, possessing extraordinary riches, abounds with the most beautiful prospects, is clothed with rich forests, varied with verdant

[1] Clarke, vol. ii. p. 506. The remark may be interesting to the Christian reader, that,—while Capernaum, the capital of Galilee, which was "exalted unto heaven," or the highest prosperity, when Jesus and his apostles preached there in vain, is brought down to hell, (to hades,) to death, or entire destruction, being nothing now but shapeless ruins, as Chorazin and Bethsaida also are,—and while Samaria, the capital of the country which bore its name, is cast down into the valley,—Sychar, then one of its inferior cities, from which the inhabitants came forth to meet Jesus, and in which many believed in him as the Saviour when they heard his word, is ranked by every traveller who describes it, among the most striking exceptions to the general desolation, which has otherwise left but a remembrance of the *cities* of Judah of Samaria, and Galilee.

[2] Mariti's Travel's, ii. 151.

[3] Clarke, ii. 400.

slopes; and extensive plains of a fine red soil are now covered with thistles, as the best proof of its fertility.[1] The valley of St. John's, in the vicinity of Jerusalem, is crowned to the top with olives and vines, while the lower part of the valley bears the milder fig and almond.[2] Whenever any spot is fixed upon as the residence, and seized as the property, either of a Turkish Aga or of an Arab Sheikh, it enjoys his protection, is made to administer to his wants or to his luxury, and the exuberance and beauty of the land of Canaan soon reappear. But such spots are, in the words of an eye-witness, only "mere sprinklings" in the midst of extensive desolation. And how could it ever have been foreseen, that the same cause, viz., the residence of despotic spoliators, was to operate in so strange a manner, as to spread a wide wasting desolation over the face of the country, and to be, at the same time, the very means of preserving the thin gleaning of its ancient glory? or that a few berries on the outmost bough would be saved by the same hand that was to shake the olive?

Among such a multiplicity of prophecies, where the prediction and the fulfilment of each is a miracle, it is almost impossible to select any as more amazing than the rest. But that concerning Samaria is not the least remarkable. The city was, for a long period, the capital of the ten tribes of Israel. Herod the Great enlarged and adorned it, and, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, gave it the name of Sebaste. There are many ancient medals which were struck there.[3] Its history is thus brought down to a period unquestionably far remote from the time of the prediction; and the narrative of a traveller, which alludes not to the prophecy, and which has even been unnoticed by commentators, shows its complete fulfilment. Besides other passages which speak of its extinction as a city, the word of the Lord which Micah saw concerning Samaria, is—"I will make

[1] Buckingham's Travels, p. 322.
[2] General Straton's MS. Travels.
[3] Calmet's Dictionary; Relandi Palæstina, p. 981.

Samaria as a heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley; and I will discover the foundations thereof." And "this great city is now wholly converted into gardens; and all the tokens that remain to testify that there has ever been such a place, are only, on the north side, a large square piazza encompassed with pillars, and on the east some poor remains of a great church." Such was the first notice of that ancient capital given by Maundrell in 1696, and it is confirmed by Mr. Buckingham in 1816: "The relative distance, local position, and unaltered name of Sebaste, leave no doubt as to the identity of its site; and," he adds, "its local features are equally seen in the threat of Micah."[1]

Such was the brief notice of the ancient capital of Israel, contained in the previous editions of this treatise. But having visited the interesting spot, the author cannot forbear from glancing at the prophetic history of Samaria, and pointing more minutely to its local features as they are indeed clearly seen in the threatenings of the prophets.

In the origin of its history, the hill of Samaria was bought of Shemer, by Omri, king of Israel, who built on it a city, which, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, he called Samaria.[2] Few seats of royalty can rival its princely site. In regard at least to its capabilities for strength or beauty, separately, far more conjointly, it could scarcely be surpassed. Its local position is most peculiar. Of a finely varied and oblong form, the insulated hill of Samaria, with a flattened summit, seems as if it had been raised by nature at "the head of the fat valley," to be at once a stronghold and a royal seat. And judgment-stricken as it is, none can stand on the

[1] Maundrell's Travels, p. 78; Buckingham's Travels, pp. 511, 512. It has also been described in similar terms by other travellers. The stones are poured down into the valley, the foundations discovered, and there is now only to be seen "the hill where once stood Samaria." Napolose has been mistaken by one traveller for the ancient Samaria.

[2] 1 Kings xvi. 24.

uncovered foundations of the vanished city, and look, from among its solitary columns, on the gleamings of its ancient glory all around, without beholding, as it were, in the mind's or in the memory's eye, the once glorious beauty of the city and of the scene, ere ever the flower that bloomed there in all its gorgeous beauty had faded, or "the crown of pride" that was seated there had been trampled under foot. On one side, beyond the narrow intervening plain, where native loveliness in wild luxuriance lingers still, the terraced hills which bound the head of the valley rise gently from the plain, as if spread forth to view in all their natural richness, and must once have formed a noble portion of the scene of "glorious beauty," which the hanging gardens of Babylon could have but faintly imitated. And on the other, the valley, varied in its features, but unvaried in natural fertility, spreads forth into a wide expanse, as if unfolding the ancient glory of Israel, while as yet there was no leanness there.

But Samaria was as noted for its wickedness as for its beauty; and therefore it is marked all over with judgments. Omri, the king of Israel, and founder of Samaria, wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord; and did worse than all that were before him. But Ahab, his son, and other successors in his stead, exceeded him in iniquity. Samaria became the seat of idolatry and wickedness; and the word of the Lord went forth against it.

The head of Ephraim is Samaria.[1] Wo to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is as a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine! Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong arm, which, as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty water overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet: and the glorious beauty which is on the head of the fat valley

[1] Isa. vii. 9.

shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which, when he that looketh upon seeth, while it is yet in his hand, he eateth it up.[1] I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.[2] I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.[3] The pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity.[4] They have deeply corrupted themselves, therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.—As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird.[5] The inhabitants of Samaria shall mourn over it—for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it. As for Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam upon the water.[6] Samaria shall become desolate: for she hath rebelled against her God.[7] The word of the Lord which Micah saw concerning Samaria—What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?—Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard. And I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley; and I will discover the foundations thereof. For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in all their counsels, that I should make you a desolation.[8] Wo to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches; that chant to the sound of the viol, and drink wine in bowls; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph; therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive.[9]

The ten tribes, whose capital was Samaria, were *the first to go captive.* The king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years; and he took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria.[10] And *the glory of*

[1] Isa. xxviii. 1—4.
[2] Hos. i. 4.
[3] Hos. ii. 6.
[4] Hos. v. 5.
[5] Hos. ix. 9, 11.
[6] Hos. x. 5, 7.
[7] Hos. xiii. 16.
[8] Micah i. 6, vi. 16.
[9] Amos vi. 1—7.
[10] 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6.

Ephraim flew away like a bird. But the predicted doom of the land of Israel, and of the city of Samaria, was not to be taken away till the captivity of Israel should also cease. Rebuilt and destroyed anew, it has ever met its yet irrevocable fate. After the expulsion of the Israelites, its new inhabitants, brought by the king of Assyria from Babylon, Cuthah, and Hamath, &c., were called by its name. But it had yet to be cast down and to be laid desolate. And the Samaritans, little more than a century before the Christian era, having, by inflicting injuries on a colony of Jews, provoked the wrath of Hyrcanus, the ethnarch and high-priest of Judea, he besieged Samaria, and *encompassed it with a ditch and double wall*, eighty furlongs or ten miles in length. His sons Antigonus and Aristobulus were set over the siege. Suffering the greatest privations, and reduced to extreme distress, the Samaritans invoked the aid of Antiochus Cyzicenes, who reigned at Damascus over Cœlo-Syria and Phœnicia. Antiochus was defeated, and all his aid was in vain, though he ravaged the land of Israel and of Judea. Samaria was again invested. *Her way was hedged up, walled with a wall she could not find her path. And the glorious beauty was as a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer, which, when he that looketh upon seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it.* After a year's siege, it was no sooner in the hand of Hyrcanus, than he destroyed it. Having taken Samaria, he demolished it utterly, till he left not any vestige of a city.[1] Though rebuilt by Gabinius, proconsul of Syria, and afterwards enlarged and adorned by Herod the Great, neither consul nor king could avert its fate. And now, no city is there, "the hill on which stood Samaria" is alone to be seen, bearing in its "features" the threatenings of the prophets.

Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong arm, which, as a destroying storm, &c., *shall cast down to the earth with the hand.—Samaria has been cast down to the earth. The crown of pride has been trodden under foot.* Not a

[1] Joseph. art. xiii. c. x. 2, 3.

single portion of a wall of any ancient edifice is standing. There are only the remains of a comparatively modern convent. Samaria is no more. But even there, where it stood in its glory, it has not been suffered to lie.

I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard. Stones abound in the mountainous regions of Israel; and it is evident, that in the terraced vineyards the stones have been gathered out of the level spaces, which were occupied only by the soil, and when freed from them were fitted for planting. In some fields in the valleys, the stones have been gathered up, and have been cast into heaps, which thus form literally "heaps of the field." The author, on being asked, while approaching Samaria, what he understood by heaps of the field, unhesitatingly answered, as thus explained, such heaps as had been passed the preceding day. Samaria, it is recorded, was utterly demolished, immediately after it was taken by Aristobulus, and must then have formed a great mass of ruins. From these it was raised again by Gabinius and by Herod the Great, who enlarged and adorned it, to render it worthy of its new name, which he gave to Augustus, who had given him a kingdom. But again it has been cast down, and more lowly than before. It is even reduced to be as an heap of the field. The stones which yet lie on its surface, bereaved of the glory that might seem to hover around a *ruin*, however defaced, have been gathered singly, and cast into heaps, as if they were heaps of a field, and not the remains of a capital. The ground has been cleared of them in various places, to form the gardens or patches of cultivated ground possessed by the inhabitants of the wretched village which stands on the extremity of the site of the ancient city. The stones, as if in a field or vineyard, have manifestly been gathered up in heaps, to prepare the ground for being sown or planted. Of all the glory of the royal city of Samaria, nothing greater remains than *an heap of the field.* But only a small portion of it now rests

where its crown of pride rose high; for it is farther said,

I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, &c. The road which ascends the hill of Samaria is enclosed on both sides by stones, so rudely piled up, that they may be said to be heaped rather than to be built. Yet all the way they testify, that the stones which once formed Samaria have been cast down. They have evidently pertained to ancient buildings, for broken capitals and pedestals, and other fragments of columns and of hewn stones, may be seen lying confusedly together. And not there only, but all along the sloping sides of the hill, from its summit to its base, lie many stones, of various forms, and fragments of columns, whose form or massiveness has stayed their course, manifestly showing that they have been *cast down*, and could not of themselves have fallen where they lie. The progress of the stones of Samaria, when *cast down by the hand, or poured down into the valley*, may be traced the whole way, from the site of the city on the top of the hill to the very bottom of the valley, where chiefly they abound, either partially strewed over it, or gathered into heaps among the trees, that *the beasts of the field may* the more freely *eat*.

And I will discover the foundations thereof. Some columns now stand alone, without princely buildings, or any others, to adorn, of which the only vestige is their *foundations*. These are indeed *discovered* and laid bare. Every stone, even to the foundations, has been cast down to the earth, and has been either thrown into a heap, as of the field, or poured down into the valley. With not the wreck of a ruin, or any stones to cover them, the foundations alone remain. But these, in respect chiefly to the principal buildings, near the now monumental columns, are most distinctly seen. They lie in lines of ridges, slightly raised above the level of the ground, the foundations of the walls being undoubtedly and most easily traced, though overgrown with grass; while, in other instances, the foundations of Sa-

maria are as plainly seen as when they were first laid, in the long parallel lines of the walls of the then future, now vanished edifices, in which unholy men of Israel kept the statutes of Omri, and broke the commandments of their God; chanted to the sound of the viol, while they would not listen to the voice of the prophets; and were at ease in Zion, while they would not mourn for the afflictions of Joseph; and trusted in the mountain of Samaria, while those very judgments were sounding in their ears, which that mountain itself has not heard in vain.

In those days of Baalim, wherein Israel burnt incense to them, and decked herself with jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgat the Lord, the citizens of her adopted and illegitimate capital, the kine of Bashan, that dwelt in the mountain of Samaria, oppressed the poor, and crushed the needy, and said unto their masters, Bring, and let us drink. The drunkards of Ephraim erred through wine, and through strong drink were out of the way; they erred in vision, and stumbled in judgment, and wrought wo to Israel. "I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast-days, her new-moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees; and I will make them a forest, and *the beasts of the field shall eat them.*"[1] And now, while Samaria is *desolate*, and the days of her iniquity have been visited upon her, the beasts of the field browse among the trees in the bottom of the valley and on the opposite hills; and on the grassy mounds,—rising one above another, that girt the lower part of the hill of Samaria, and abound also on those that adjoin it, retaining the form of terraced vineyards,—*the beasts of the field* now pasture where the vines circled, as in ringlets, the head of the fat valley on which Samaria was the crown of pride.

But Samaria has to assume an altered and a smiling aspect, when she shall see her native children return to her again. "Behold, I will allure her, saith the Lord,

[1] Hosea ii. 11.

and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her, and I will give her vineyards from hence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: she shall sing there, as in the day of her youth, as in the day when she came forth out of the land of Egypt. I will betroth thee unto me for ever—in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness.[1] Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria, O virgin of Israel; the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things. For there shall be a day that the watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God.[2] The house of Jacob shall possess the fields of Samaria."[3] And, while the crown of pride has been trodden under foot, in that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, to the residue of his people,[4] the remnant of Israel.

But the predicted fate of JERUSALEM has been more conspicuously displayed, and more fully illustrated, than that of the capital of the ten tribes of Israel. It formed the theme of prophecy from the death-bed of Jacob,—and as the seat of the government of the children of Judah, the sceptre departed not from it till the Messiah appeared, on the expiration of seventeen hundred years after the death of the Patriarch, and till the period of its desolation, prophesied of by Daniel, had arrived. A destiny diametrically opposite to the former, then awaited it, even for a longer duration; and ere its greatness was gone, even at the very time when it was crowded with Jews, from all quarters, resorting to the feast, and when it was inhabited by a numerous population dwelling in security and peace, its doom was denounced,—that it was to be trodden down of the gentiles, till the time of the gentiles should be fulfilled. The time of the gentiles is not yet fulfilled, and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the gentiles. The Jews have often attempted to recover it: no distance of space or of time can separate

[1] Hosea ii. 14, 15, 19. [2] Jer. xxxi. 5, 6.
[3] Obad. 19. [4] Isa. xxviii. 5.

it from their affections; they perform their devotions with their faces towards it, as if it were the object of their worship as well as of their love; and although their desire to return be so strong, fixed, and indelible, that every Jew, in every generation, counts himself an exile; yet they have never been able to rebuild their temple, nor to recover Jerusalem from the hands of the gentiles. But greater power than that of a proscribed and exiled race has been added to their own, in attempting to frustrate the counsel that professed to be of God. Julian, the emperor of the Romans, not only permitted but invited the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and their temple; and promised to re-establish them in their paternal city. By that single act, more than by all his writings, he might have destroyed the credibility of the gospel, and restored his beloved but deserted paganism. The zeal of the Jews was equal to his own; and the work was begun by laying again the foundations of the temple. In the space of three days, Titus had formerly encompassed that city with a wall when it was crowded with his enemies; and, instead of being obstructed, that great work, when it was confirmatory of an express prediction of Jesus, was completed with an astonishing celerity;—and what could hinder the emperor of Rome from building a temple at Jerusalem, when every Jew was zealous for the work? Nothing appeared against it but a single sentence uttered, some centuries before, by one who had been crucified. If that word had been of man, would all the power of the monarch of the world have been thwarted in opposing it? And why did not Julian, with all his inveterate enmity and laborious opposition to Christianity, execute a work so easy and desirable? A heathen historian relates, that fearful balls of fire, bursting from the earth, sometimes burned the workmen, rendered the place inaccessible, and caused them to desist from the undertaking.[1] The same narrative is attested by others.

[1] "Imperii sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolymam templum, quod, post multa et interneciva certamina obsidente Vespasiano, pos-

Chrysostom, who was a living witness, appealed to the existing state of the foundations, and to the universal testimony which was given of the fact. And an eminent modern traveller, who visited, and who minutely examined the spot, testifies that "there seems every reason for believing, that in the reticulated remains still visible on the site of the temple, is seen a standing memorial of Julian's discomfiture."[1] While destitute of this additional confirmation of its truth, the historical evidence was too strong even for the skepticism of Gibbon altogether to gainsay; and brought him to the acknowledgment that such authority must astonish an incredulous mind. Even independently of the miraculous interposition, the fulfilment is the same. The attempt was made avowedly, and it was abandoned without any apparent cause. It was never accomplished; and the prophecy stands fulfilled. But even if the attempt of Julian had never been made, the truth of the prophecy itself is unassailable. The Jews have never been reinstated in Judea. Jerusalem has ever been trodden down of the gentiles. The edict of Adrian was renewed by the successors of Julian; and no Jews could approach unto Jerusalem but by bribery or by stealth. It was a spot unlawful for them to touch. In the crusades, all the power of Europe was employed to rescue Jerusalem from the heathens, but equally in vain. It has been trodden down for nearly eighteen centuries by its successive mas-

teaque Tito, ægre est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis; negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro præfectis. Cum itaque rei eidem instaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ rector, metuendi globi flammarum, prope fundamenta, crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum; hocque modo, elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum." (Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxii. cap. i. § 2, 3. Grot. de Ver. &c. Rufini Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. xxxvii. Socrat. lib. ii. c. xvii. Theodoret. lib. iii. c. xvii. Sozomen. lib. v. c. xxi. Cassiodor. Hist. Tripart. lib. vi. c. xliii. Nicephor. Callis. lib. x. c. xxxii. Greg Nazianz. in Julian. Orat. ii. Chrysostom. de L. Bab. Mart. et contra Judæos, iii. p. 491. Lind.—Vide Am. Mar. tom. iii. p. 2.)

[1] Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. note 1, at the end of the volume.

ters; by Romans, Grecians, Persians, Saracens, Mamelukes, Turks, Christians; and again by the worst of rulers, the Arabs and the Turks. And could any thing be more improbable to have happened, or more impossible to have been foreseen by man, than that any people should be banished from their own capital and country, and remain expelled and expatriated for nearly eighteen hundred years? Did the same fate ever befall any nation, though no prophecy existed respecting it? Is there any doctrine in Scripture so hard to be believed as was this single fact at the period of its prediction? And even with the example of the Jews before us, is it likely, or is it credible, or who can foretell, that the present inhabitants of any country upon earth shall be banished into all nations,—retain their distinctive character,—meet with an unparalleled fate,—continue a people,—without a government and without a country,—and remain for an indefinite period, exceeding seventeen hundred years, till the fulfilment of a prescribed event to be accomplished after so many generations? Must not the knowledge of such truths be derived from that Prescience alone which scans alike the will and the ways of mortals, the actions of future nations, and the history of the latest generations?

Jerusalem was the city which the Lord did choose to place his name there; and he loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Judah. But while the land has been defiled, and the people have been scattered abroad, and Jerusalem has been trodden down of the gentiles, *Zion* also has been *filled with judgment!* Together with the other holy places, it has been defiled. The abomination of desolation was set up in the holy place. The monuments of idolatry occupied the place of the sanctuary of the Lord. And the mosque of Omar was built where the temple of Solomon had stood. "A ploughshare was drawn over the consecrated ground;" and to this day Zion, as was foretold, is *ploughed over as a field.* "At the time when I visited this sacred ground," says Dr. Richardson, "one part of it supported a crop

of barley, another was *undergoing the labour of the plough*, and the soil turned up consisted of stone and lime mixed with earth, such as is usually met with in the foundations of ruined cities. It is nearly a mile in circumference. We have here another remarkable instance of the special fulfilment of prophecy; *therefore shall Zion for your sakes be ploughed as a field.*" Mic. iii. 12; Jer. xxvi. 18.[1]

But though a ploughshare did pass over the consecrated ground, as a sign of perpetual interdiction, Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and they that return of her with righteousness. The Lord is jealous for Zion: and will return unto it. There is a coming *year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.* Thou, O Lord, shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. *This shall be written for the generation to come;* and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." Ps. cii. 13, &c. The place of the sanctuary of the Lord shall yet be beautified. Jerusalem, not Rome, shall be the eternal city. For thus it is written, "The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee; I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time." Isa. lx. 14, &c.

But the prophecies are not confined to the land of Judea; they are equally unlimited in their range over space as over time. After a lapse of many ages, the countries around Judea are now beginning to be known.

[1] Richardson's Travels, p. 349.

And each succeeding traveller, in the communication of new discoveries concerning them, is gradually unfolding the very description which the prophets gave of their poverty and desolation, at the time of their great prosperity and luxuriance. The countries of the Ammonites, of the Moabites, of the Edomites, or inhabitants of Idumea, and of the Philistines, all bordered with Judea, and each is the theme of prophecy. The relative positions of them all are distinctly defined in Scripture, and have been clearly ascertained.[1] And the territories of the ancient enemies of the Jews, long overrun by the enemies of Christianity, present many a proof of the inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, and of the truth of the Christian religion.

AMMON.

The country anciently peopled by the Ammonites, is situated to the east of Palestine, and is now possessed partly by the Arabs and by the Turks. It is naturally one of the most fertile provinces of Syria, and it was for many ages one of the most populous. The Ammonites often invaded the land of Israel: and at one period, united with the Moabites, they retained possession of a great part of it, and grievously oppressed the Israelites for the space of eighteen years. Jephthah repulsed them, and took twenty of their cities; but they continued afterwards to harass the borders of Israel, and their capital was besieged by the forces of David, and their country rendered tributary. They regained and long maintained their independence, till Jotham, the king of Judah, subdued them, and exacted from them an annual tribute of a hundred talents, and thirty thousand quarters

[1] Relandi Palæstina Illustrata; D'Anville's Map; Maps in Volney's, Burckhardt's, and Buckingham's Travels; Wells' Scripture Geography; Gibbon's History; Shaw's Travels, &c.

of wheat and barley; yet they soon contested again with their ancient enemies, and exulted in the miseries that befell them, when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, and carried its inhabitants into captivity. In after times, though successively oppressed by the Chaldeans, (when some of the earliest prophecies respecting it were fulfilled,) and by the Egyptians and Syrians, Ammon was a highly productive and populous country, when the Romans became masters of all the provinces of Syria; and several of the ten allied cities, which gave name to the celebrated Decapolis, were included within its boundaries. Even when first invaded by the Saracens, (A. D. 632,) "this country (including Moab) was enriched by the various benefits of trade; by the vigilance of the emperors it was covered with a line of forts, and the *populous cities* of Gerasa, Philadelphia, (Ammon,) and Bosra, were secure, at least from a surprise, by the solid structure of their walls. Twelve thousand horse could sally from the gates of Bosra," &c.[1] Volney bears witness, "that in the immense plains of the Hauran, ruins are continually to be met with, and that what is said of its actual fertility perfectly corresponds with the idea given of it in the Hebrew writings."[2] The fact of its natural fertility is corroborated by every traveller who has visited it. And "it is evident," says Burckhardt, "that the whole country must have been extremely well cultivated, in order to have afforded subsistence to the inhabitants of so many towns,"[3] as are now visible only

[1] Gibbon's Hist. vol. ix. c. 51, p. 383.
[2] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 299.
[3] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 357.

Having frequent occasion, in the subsequent pages, to refer to the authority of the celebrated and lamented traveller, J. Lewis Burckhardt, the following ample testimonies to his talents, perseverance, and veracity, will show with what perfect confidence his statements may be relied on, especially as the subject of the fulfilment of prophecy, being never once alluded to in all his writings, seems to have been wholly foreign to his view, as well as to theirs who, without partiality, have thus appreciated his labours. "He was a traveller of no ordinary description, a gen

in their ruins. While the fruitfulness of the land of Ammon, and the high degree of prosperity and power in which it subsisted, long prior and long subsequent to the date of the predictions, are thus indisputably established by historical evidence, and by existing proofs, the researches of recent travellers (who were actuated by the mere desire of exploring these regions, and obtaining geographical information) have made known its present aspect; and testimony the most clear, unexceptionable, and conclusive, has been borne to the state of dire desolation to which it is and has long been reduced.

It was prophesied concerning AMMON, "Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. I will make Rabbah of the Ammonites a stable for camels, and a couching-place for flocks. Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries; I will destroy thee. The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. Rabbah

tleman by birth, and a scholar by education; he added to the ordinary acquirements of a traveller, accomplishments which fitted him for any society. His description of the countries through which he passed, his narrative of incidents, his transactions with the natives, are all placed before us with equal clearness and simplicity. In every page they will find that ardour of research, that patience of investigation, that passionate pursuit after truth, for which he was eminently distinguished." (Quarterly Review, vol. xxii. p. 437.) "He appears from his books and letters, to have been a modest, laborious, learned, and sensible man, exempt from prejudice, *unattached to systems;* detailing what he saw plainly and correctly, and of very prudent and discreet conduct." (Edinburgh Review, number lxvii. p. 109.) The following extract from General Straton's manuscript Travels was written at Cairo, and is the more valuable, as containing the result of personal knowledge and observation: "Burckhardt speaks Arabic perfectly, has adopted the costume, and goes to the religious places of worship; has been at Mecca; in short, follows in every thing the Turkish manners and customs, and he is not to be distinguished from a Mussulman. With what advantage must he travel! He is by birth a Swiss, but having been educated in England, speaks our language perfectly."

(the chief city) of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap. Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation."[1]

Ammon was to be delivered to be a spoil to the heathen, to be destroyed, and to be a perpetual desolation. "All this country, formerly so populous and flourishing, is now changed into a vast desert."[2] Ruins are seen in every direction. The country is divided between the Turks and the Arabs, but chiefly possessed by the latter. The extortions of the one, and the depredations of the other, keep it in *perpetual desolation*, and make it *a spoil to the heathen.* "The far greater part of the country is uninhabited, being abandoned to the wandering Arabs, and the towns and villages are in a state of total ruin."[3] "At every step are to be found the vestiges of ancient cities, the remains of many temples, public edifices, and Greek churches."[4] The cities are desolate. "Many of the ruins present no objects of any interest. They consist of a few walls of dwelling-houses, heaps of stones, the foundations of some public edifices, and a few cisterns filled up; there is nothing entire, but it appears that the mode of building was very solid, all the remains being formed of large stones.—In the vicinity of Ammon there is a fertile plain interspersed with low hills, which for the greater part are covered with ruins."[5]

While the country is thus despoiled and desolate, there are valleys and tracts throughout it, which "are covered with a fine coat of verdant pasture, and are places of resort to the Bedouins, where they pasture their camels and their sheep."[6] "The whole way we traversed," says Seetzen, "we saw villages in ruins, and met numbers of Arabs with their camels," &c. Mr. Buckingham describes a building among the ruins of Ammon, "the masonry of which was evidently con-

[1] Ezek. xxv. 2, 5, 7, 10, xxi. 32; Jer. xlix. 2; Zeph. ii. 9.
[2] Seetzen's Travels, p. 34. [3] Seetzen's Travels, p. 37
[4] Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, Introd. pp. 37, 38, 44.
[5] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 355, 357, 364.
[6] Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, &c., p. 329.

structed of materials gathered from the ruins of other and older buildings on the spot. On entering it at the south end," he adds, "we came to an open square court, with arched recesses on each side, the sides nearly facing the cardinal points. The recesses in the northern and southern wall were originally open passages, and had arched doorways facing each other; but the first of these was found wholly closed up, and the last was partially filled up, leaving only a narrow passage, just sufficient for the entrance of one man, and of the goats, which the Arab keepers drive in here occasionally for shelter during the night." He relates that he lay down among flocks of sheep and goats, close beside the ruins of Ammon; and particularly remarks that, during the night, he was almost entirely prevented from sleeping by the bleating of flocks.[1] So literally true is it, although Seetzen, and Burckhardt, and Buckingham, who relate the facts, make no reference or allusion whatever to any of the prophecies, and travelled for a different object than the elucidation of the Scriptures, that *the chief city of the Ammonites is a stable for camels, and a couching place for flocks.*

The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. While the Jews, who were long their hereditary enemies, continue as distinct a people as ever, though dispersed among all nations, no trace of the Ammonites remains, none are now designated by their name, nor do any claim descent from them. They did exist, however, long after the time when the eventful annihilation of their race was foretold, for they retained their name, and continued a great multitude until the second century of the Christian era.[2] *Yet they are cut off from the people. Ammon has perished out of the countries; it is destroyed.* No people is attached to its soil; none regard it as their country and adopt its name;

[1] Buckingham's Travels among the Arab Tribes, under the title of Ruins of Ammon, pp. 72, 73, &c.

[2] Justin Martyr, p. 392, edit. Thirl.

and *the Ammonites are not remembered among the nations.*

Rabbah (Rabbah Ammon, the chief city of Ammon) *shall be a desolate heap.* Situated as it was, on each side of the borders of a plentiful stream, encircled by a fruitful region, strong by nature and fortified by art, nothing could have justified the suspicion, or warranted the conjecture in the mind of an uninspired mortal, that the royal city of Ammon, whatever disasters might possibly befall it in the fate of war or change of masters, would ever undergo so total a transmutation as to become a desolate heap. But although, in addition to such tokens of its continuance as a city, more than a thousand years had given uninterrupted experience of its stability, ere the prophets of Israel denounced its fate; yet a period of equal length has now marked it out, as it exists to this day, a desolate heap, a perpetual or permanent desolation. Its ancient name is still preserved by the Arabs; and its site is now "covered with the ruins of private buildings, nothing of them remaining except the foundations and some of the door-posts. The buildings exposed to the atmosphere are all in decay,"[1] so that they may be said literally to form a *desolate heap.* The public edifices, which once strengthened or adorned the city, after a long resistance to decay, are now also desolate; and the remains of the most entire among them, subjected as they are to the abuse and spoliation of the wild Arabs, can be adapted to no better object than *a stable for camels.* Yet these broken walls and ruined palaces, which attest the ancient splendour of Ammon, can now, by means of a single act of reflection, or simple process of reasoning, be made subservient to a far nobler purpose than the most magnificent edifices on earth can be, when they are contemplated as monuments on which the historic and prophetic truth of Scripture is blended in one bright inscription. A minute detail of them may not therefore be uninteresting.

Seetzen, whose indefatigable ardour led him, in defi-

[1] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 359, 360.

ance of danger, the first to explore the countries which lie east of the Jordan, and east and south of the Dead Sea, or the territories of Ammon, Moab, and Edom, justly characterizes Ammon as "once the residence of many kings,—an ancient town, which flourished long before the Greeks and Romans, and even before the Hebrews;"[1] and he chiefly enumerates those remains of ancient greatness and splendour which are most distinguishable amidst its ruins. "Although this town has been destroyed and deserted for many ages, I still found there some remarkable ruins, which attest its ancient splendour. Such as, 1st, A square building, very highly ornamented, which has been perhaps a mausoleum. 2dly, The ruins of a large palace. 3dly, A magnificent amphitheatre of immense size, and well preserved, with a peristyle of Corinthian pillars without pedestals. 4th, A temple with a great number of columns. 5th, The ruins of a large church, perhaps the see of a bishop in the time of the Greek emperors. 6th, The remains of a temple with columns set in a circular form, and which are of an extraordinary size. 7th, The remains of the ancient wall, with many other edifices."[2] Burckhardt, who afterwards visited the spot, describes it with greater minuteness. He gives a plan of the ruins; and particularly noted the ruins of many temples, of a spacious church, a curved wall, a high arched bridge, the banks and bed of the river still partially paved; a large theatre, with successive tiers of apartments excavated in the rocky side of a hill; Corinthian columns, fifteen feet high; the castle, a very extensive building, the walls of which are thick, and denote a remote antiquity; many cisterns and vaults; and a plain covered with the decayed ruins of private buildings;[3]—monuments of ancient splendour standing amidst a *desolate heap.*

[1] A brief account of the countries adjoining the Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, by M. Seetzen, Conseiller d'Ambassade de S. M. l'Empereur de Russe, p. 35, 36.

[2] Seetzen's Travels, pp. 35, 36.

[3] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 358, &c.

More recent travellers, with this treatise in their hands, or with the full knowledge of these prophecies, have visited Ammon; and the testimony to the predicted facts, first unconsciously given, has been repeated and corroborated by those who have personally testified, as they consciously witnessed, the fulfilment of the prophecies.

"The wonderful fulfilment of the prophecies," Lord Claud Hamilton observes, "is an interesting subject of observation in this country." "The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. Rabbah of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap. Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation. I will make Rabbah of the Ammonites a stable for camels, and a couching place for flocks." And while he was traversing the ruins of the city, the number of goats and sheep which were driven in among them was annoying, however remarkable in fulfilling the prophecies.

"The dreariness of its (Ammon's) present aspect," says Lord Lindsay, "is quite indescribable; it looks like the abode of death; the valley stinks with dead camels, one of which was rolling in the stream; and though we saw none among the ruins, they were absolutely *covered* in every direction with their dung. That morning's ride would have convinced a skeptic. How runs the prophecy? 'I will make Rabbah a stable for camels,'" &c.[1] "Ammon is now quite deserted, except by the Bedouins, who water their flocks at its little river, &c. We met sheep and goats by thousands, and camels by hundreds, coming down to drink, all in beautiful condition."[2]

The "royal city" of the Ammonites withstood a hard-pressed siege, in the days of David, king of Israel, who himself fought against it, and finally took it. And under the name of Philadelphia, after an interval of upwards of sixteen hundred years, it was a strong and populous city when the Saracens invaded the eastern empire.

Its Acropolis, long its chief stronghold, is still con-

[1] Lord Lindsay's Travels, vol. ii. p. 75. [2] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 117.

spicuous among its ruins. It stands, as described by Lord Claud Hamilton, "on an isolated hill to the north of the town. Its walls are high, very well built, and in many parts in good preservation; but within, the ruins, rubbish, and herbage, have grown nearly to their level. The chief of these ruins are those of a temple, which was once adorned with a portico and peristyle of grand Corinthian columns, all now prostrate; but their massive remains, immense capitals, and large pediments, attest their former magnificence. Of one of the most perfect of these, the shaft alone, without pediment or capital, is thirty-three feet in length, and four feet and a half in diameter." But the Acropolis, no less than the city, presents its illustrations of the word of the Lord. "There is a small stone building quite entire, now used as a shelter for flocks, of which there are many. And without the walls, as otherwise within them, nothing remains but scattered materials of former habitations, now partially concealed by the flowers and grass.

"Leaving the Acropolis, we descended, and, crossing the stream, on the northern bank of which, among other remains, are those of an Ionic colonnade, we proceeded to the farthest ruins. The most remote of these is a small theatre, evidently intended for scenic representations, as the space behind the proscenium was enclosed, and formed part of the building. Three passages remained as perfect as when they were formed, and they opened upon the stage by three arches. There were likewise side entrances, and communicating passages well adapted for theatrical purposes. The proscenium was very handsomely ornamented; above the three arches ran a rich frieze of Corinthian decorations most beautifully carved, and perfectly uninjured; above were three niches for statues; the seats were on both sides perfect, but the centre forming the stage has been thrown down. There were three entrances by handsome arches, which brought the spectators to a broad landing-place, halfway up the rows of seats, and two smaller arches, which probably served for entrances to the seats of

honour, which here, as at Pompeii, were close to the stage. The theatre is remarkably well built, and is composed of very handsome stone; from without there are three entrances to the scenes, and four niches for statues, two between the doors, and two flanking them.

"The great theatre, near the other, is a grand edifice: it is scooped out of the side of the hill, being partly composed of the living rock, but chiefly of masonry. This theatre must have been intended for games and other exercises in open air, as, instead of the enclosed passages and covered chambers behind the stage, there is only an open colonnade of handsome Corinthian columns, which extend from one extreme to the other of the rows of seats. Within the colonnade is an extensive arena, of a horse-shoe form, 128 feet from seat to seat. Forty-three rows of seats extend to a great height, and are separated into three tiers by broad landing-places: seven radii of smaller steps admitted the spectators to their several seats, and each tier has several recesses. The second tier has doors communicating to a high arched passage, which runs round the theatre, and opens upon a side staircase, by which means the crowd could be divided; back staircases also mount from these passages to the upper tier, so as to enable the more humble spectators to gain and leave their seats without incommoding their richer neighbours below. In the centre of the uppermost bench is excavated a square chamber, with a beautifully carved cornice, having an elegant niche of the shell pattern on each side. There is, as usual in all ancient theatres, an arch entering upon the arena on each side where the seats terminate, reaching the proscenium.

"Of the other principal ruins a more slight notice may be given. A grand building, once apparently of an octagonal form, has still four of its sides perfect, which contain a grand alcove, and three lesser recesses. A colonnade of large Corinthian pillars was once ranged within it, but what purpose it served, there are no means of ascertaining. Heaps of ruins lie around it in

bewildering confusion. Near to it are large houses, divided into many apartments, and a more modern church in good preservation; but all are alike deserted, though little labour would restore some of these buildings, not to their pristine glory, but to useful dwellings. And, passing from these, other ruins are numerous but uninteresting. But the remains yet standing of one grand temple are sufficient to exhibit its former magnificence, surrounded as it was by lofty columns, some of which are still entire. A noble alcove, richly wrought, containing niches, and supported by pilasters, is yet perfect, a beautiful specimen of the riches of ornament, and fine finish of the corners. And near to the ruinous town is a little fane, square without, but circular within, both sides being most richly decorated with frieze corners and pilasters of the Corinthian order. Four niches within are equally elaborately carved. It is divided into square apartments, each containing a variety of rich and elegant ornaments; and an open arch, which forms the entrance, has the most beautifully carved ceiling which I ever saw."[1]

Such is now the once royal city of Ammon. Numerous ruins, and heaps in bewildering confusion, show how it has become a *desolate heap*. But this is not now its only feature. Some buildings in good preservation, and others still perfect, whatever purpose they may have been constructed to serve, fulfil now the purpose which, long before their erection, the prophet assigned them. Arches, of old trodden by the lovers of pleasure, of high or of low degree, unbroken by time, which has laid the gay flutterers in the dust, are now promiscuously crowded by beasts; and where nobles were before kept from contact with their fellows, the pilgrim traveller in a desolate land now has cause to complain of the annoyance of flocks. It was not for them that arches, sculptured with exquisite art, and almost unrivalled beauty, were erected; nor to shelter them that walls which, uninjured, have endured for ages, were built; nor did stables for

[1] Lord Claud Hamilton's Journal.

camels, and couching-places for flocks, enter into the design of the architects of the palaces, theatres, or temples of Ammon, nor of the sculptors of their beautifully carved cornices and ceilings, and grand columns and alcoves. But He who saw the end from the beginning, declared it, ere ever one of these edifices of Grecian architecture was constructed, or the foundation of any of them was laid, or the plan of any of them was thought of; the appointed doom, and destiny, and use to which they have been brought, were delineated by the prophets; and as Ammon was taken by David, so also, in a higher sense, it is now held captive by the word of the Lord, and awaits the time when the children of Israel shall be restored, and the Lord, in the latter days, shall bring again the captivity of Ammon

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MOAB.

The prophecies concerning Moab are more numerous and not less remarkable. Those of them which met their completion in ancient times, and which related to particular events in the history of the Moabites, and to the result of their conflict with the Jews or any of the neighbouring states, however necessary they may have been at the time for strengthening the faith or supporting the courage of the children of Israel, need not now be adduced in evidence of inspiration; for there are abundant predictions which refer so clearly to decisive and unquestionable facts, that there is scarcely a single feature peculiar to the land of Moab, as it now exists, which was not marked by the prophets in their delineation of the low estate to which, from the height of its wickedness and haughtiness, it was finally to be brought down.

"Against Moab thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God

of Israel, Wo unto Nebo! for it is spoiled; Kiriathaim is confounded and taken; Misgab is confounded and dismayed. There shall be no more praise of Moab. And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken. Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away; for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him wanderers that shall cause him to wander. How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod! Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strongholds. Moab is confounded, for it is broken down. Moab is spoiled. And judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath, and upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim; and upon Kiriathaim, and upon Bethgamul, and upon Bethmeon, and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the Lord. O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud,) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart. And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the wine-presses; none shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting. From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim; the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate. I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure. They

shall cry, how is it broken down! And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the Lord. The cities of Aroer are forsaken; they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Moab shall be a perpetual desolation."[1]

The land of Moab lay to the east and south-east of Judea, and bordered on the east, north-east, and partly on the south of the Dead Sea. Its early history is nearly analogous to that of Ammon; and the soil, though perhaps more diversified, is, in many places where the desert and plains of salt have not encroached on its borders, of equal fertility. There are manifest and abundant vestiges of its ancient greatness. "The whole of the plains are covered with the sites of towns, on every eminence or spot convenient for the construction of one. And as the land is capable of rich cultivation, there can be no doubt that the country, now so deserted, once presented a continued picture of plenty and fertility."[2] The form of fields is still visible: and there are the remains of Roman highways, which in some places are completely paved, and on which there are mile-stones of the times of Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, and Severus, with the number of the miles legible upon them. Wherever any spot is cultivated, the corn is luxuriant; and the richness of the soil cannot perhaps be more clearly illustrated than by the fact, that one grain of Heshbon wheat exceeds in dimensions two of the ordinary sort, and more than double the number of grains grow on the stalk. The frequency, and almost, in many instances, the close vicinity of the sites of the ancient towns, "prove that the population of the country was formerly proportioned to its natural fertility."[3] Such evidence may surely suffice to prove, that the country was well cultivated and peopled at a period so long

[1] Jer. xlviii. 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20—25, 28, 29, 33, 34, 38 39, 42; Isa. xvii. 2; Zeph. ii. 9.

[2] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 378.

[3] Ibid. pp. 377, 378, 456, 460.

posterior to the date of the predictions, that no cause less than supernatural could have existed at the time when they were delivered, which could have authorized the assertion, with the least probability or apparent possibility of its truth, that Moab would ever have been reduced to that state of great and permanent desolation in which it has continued for so many ages, and which vindicates and ratifies to this hour the truth of the scriptural prophecies.

The cities of Moab were to be desolate without any to dwell therein; no city was to escape. Moab was to flee away. And the cities of Moab have all disappeared. Their place, together with the adjoining part of Idumea, is characterized, in the map of Volney's Travels, by *the ruins of towns*. His information respecting these ruins was derived from some of the wandering Arabs; and its accuracy has been fully corroborated by the testimony of different European travellers of high respectability and undoubted veracity, who have since visited this devastated region. The whole country abounds with ruins. And Burckhardt, who encountered many difficulties in so desolate and dangerous a land, thus records the brief history of a few of them: "The ruins of Eleale, Heshbon, Meon, Medaba, Dibon, Aroer, still subsist to illustrate the history of the Beni Israel."[1] And it might, with equal truth, have been added, that they still subsist to confirm the inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, or to prove that the seers of Israel were the prophets of God, for the desolation of each of these very cities was the theme of a prediction. Every thing worthy of observation respecting them has been detailed, not only in Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, but also by Seetzen, and, more recently, by Captains Irby and Mangles, who, along with Mr. Bankes and Mr. Legh, visited this deserted district. The predicted judgment has fallen with such truth upon these cities, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near, and they are so utterly *broken down*, that even the prying curiosity of such in-

[1] Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, introduction, p. 38.

defatigable travellers could discover, among a multiplicity of ruins, only a few remains so entire as to be worthy of particular notice. The subjoined description is drawn from their united testimony.—Among the ruins of El Aal (Eleale) are a number of large cisterns, fragments of buildings, and foundations of houses. At Heshban (Heshbon) are the ruins of a large ancient town, together with the remains of a temple, and some edifices. A few broken shafts of columns are still standing; and there are a number of deep wells cut in the rock.[1] The ruins of *Medaba* are about two miles in circumference. There are many remains of the walls of private houses constructed with blocks of silex, but not a single edifice is standing. The chief object of interest is an immense tank or cistern of hewn stones, "which, as there is no stream at Medaba," Burckhardt remarks, "might still be of use to the Bedouins, were the surrounding ground cleared of the rubbish to allow the water to flow into it; *but such an undertaking is far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs.*" There is also the foundation of a temple built with large stones, and apparently of great antiquity, with two columns near it.[2] The ruins of *Diban*, (Dibon,) situated in the midst of a fine plain, are of considerable extent, but present nothing of interest.[3] The neighbouring hot wells, and the similarity of the name, identify the ruins of Myoun with *Meon*, or Beth-meon of Scripture.[4] Of this ancient city, as well as of Araayr, (Aroer,) nothing is now remarkable but what is common to them with all the cities of Moab—their entire desolation. The extent of the ruins of *Rabba* (Rabbath-Moab,) formerly the residence of the kings of Moab, sufficiently proves its ancient importance, though no other object can be particularized

[1] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 365.

[2] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 366; Seetzen's Travels, p. 37; Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 471.

[3] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 462; Seetzen's Travels, p. 38.

[4] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 365; Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 464.

among the ruins, except the remains of a palace or temple, some of the walls of which are still standing; a gate belonging to another building; and an insulated altar. There are many remains of private buildings, but none entire. There being no springs on the spot, the town had two birkets, the largest of which is cut entirely out of the rocky ground, together with many cisterns.[1]

Mount *Nebo* was completely barren when Burckhardt passed over it, and the site of the ancient city had not been ascertained.[2] *Nebo is spoiled.*

While the ruins of all these cities still retain their ancient names, and are the most conspicuous amidst the wide scene of general desolation, and while each of them was in like manner particularized in the visions of the prophet, they yet formed but a small number of the cities of Moab; and the rest are also, in similar verification of the prophecies, *desolate, without any to dwell therein.* Not one of the ancient cities of Moab now exists, as tenanted by man. Kerek, which neither bears any resemblance in name to any of the cities of Moab which are mentioned as existing in the time of the Israelites, nor possesses any monuments which denote a very remote antiquity, is the only nominal town in the whole country; and, in the words of Seetzen, who visited it, "in its present ruined state it can only be called a hamlet; and the houses have only one floor."[3] But the most populous and fertile province in Europe (especially any situated in the interior of a country like Moab) is not covered so thickly with towns as Moab is plentiful in ruins, deserted and desolate though now it be. Burckhardt enumerates about *fifty* ruined sites within its boundaries, many of them extensive. In general they are a *broken down* and undistinguishable mass of ruins; and many of them have not been closely inspected. But in some instances, there are the remains of temples, sepulchral monuments, the ruins of edifices constructed of

[1] Seetzen's Travels, p. 39; Burckhardt's Travels, p. 377.
[2] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 370.
[3] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 338; Seetzen's Travels, p. 39.

very large stones, in one of which buildings "some of the stones are twenty feet in length, and so broad that one constitutes the thickness of the wall;" traces of hanging gardens; entire columns lying on the ground, three feet in diameter, and fragments of smaller columns; and many cisterns cut out of the rock. When the towns of Moab existed in their prime, and were at ease,—when arrogance and haughtiness and pride prevailed amongst them, the desolation and total desertion and abandonment of them all must have utterly surpassed all human conception. And that such numerous cities, which subsisted for many ages—which were diversified in their sites, some of them being built on eminences, and naturally strong, others on plains, and surrounded by the richest soil,—some situated in valleys by the side of a plentiful stream, and others where art supplied the deficiencies of nature, and where immense cisterns were excavated out of the rock,—and which exhibit in their ruins many monuments of ancient prosperity, and many remains easily convertible into present utility,—should have all fled away, all met the same indiscriminate fate, and be all *desolate without any to dwell therein*, notwithstanding all these ancient assurances of their permanent durability, and these existing facilities and inducements for being the habitations of men,—is a matter of just wonder in the present day; and had any other people been the possessors of Moab, the fact would either have been totally impossible, or unaccountable. Trying as this test of the truth of prophecy is, *that* is the word of God, and not of erring man, which can so well and so triumphantly abide it. *They shall cry of Moab, How is it broken down!*

The valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed. Moab has often been a field of contest between the Arabs and the Turks; and although the former have retained possession of it, both have mutually reduced it to desolation. The different tribes of Arabs who traverse it, not only bear a permanent and habitual hostility to Christians and to Turks, but one tribe is often at va-

riance and at war with another; and the regular cultivation of the soil, or the improvement of those natural advantages of which the country is so full, is a matter either never thought of, or that cannot be realized. Property is there the creature of power and not of law; and possession forms no security where plunder is the preferable right. Hence the extensive plains, where they are not partially covered with wood, present a barren aspect, which is only relieved at intervals by a few clusters of wild fig-trees, that show how the richest gifts of nature degenerate when unaided by the industry of man. And instead of the profusion which the plains must have exhibited in every quarter, nothing but "patches of the best soil in the territory are now cultivated by Arabs;" and these only "whenever they have the prospect of being able to secure the harvest against the incursions of enemies."[1] The Arab herds now roam at freedom over the valleys and the plains; and "the many vestiges of field enclosures"[2] form not any obstruction; they wander undisturbed around the tents of their masters, over the face of the country; and while *the valley is perished, and the plain destroyed, the cities also of Aroer are forsaken; they are for flocks which lie down, and none make them afraid.*

The strong contrast between the ancient and the actual state of Moab is exemplified in the condition of the inhabitants as well as of the land; and the coincidence between the prediction and the fact is as striking in the one case as in the other.

The days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him (Moab) wanderers that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels. The Bedouin (*wandering*) Arabs are now the chief and almost the only inhabitants of a country once studded with cities. Traversing the country, and fixing their tents for a short time in one place, and then decamping to another, depasturing every part successively, and despoiling the whole land of its natural produce, they *are wanderers who have come up*

[1] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 369.
[2] Ibid. p. 365.

against it, and who keep it in a state of perpetual desolation. They lead a wandering life; and the only regularity they know or practise, is to act upon a systematic scheme of spoliation. They prevent any from forming a fixed settlement who are inclined to attempt it; for although the fruitfulness of the soil would abundantly repay the labour of settlers, and render migration wholly unnecessary, even if the population were increased more than tenfold; yet the Bedouins forcibly deprive them of the means of subsistence, compel them to search for it elsewhere, and, in the words of the prediction, literally *cause them to wander.* "It may be remarked generally of the Bedouins," says Burckhardt, in describing their extortions in this very country, "that wherever they are the masters of the cultivators, the latter are soon reduced to beggary by their unceasing demands."[1]

O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. In a general description of the condition of the inhabitants of that extensive desert which now occupies the place of these ancient flourishing states, Volney, in plain but unmeant illustration of this prediction, remarks, that "the wretched peasants live in perpetual dread of losing the fruit of their labours; and no sooner have they gathered in their harvest, than they hasten to secrete it in private places, and retire among the rocks which border on the Dead Sea."[2] Towards the opposite extremity of the land of Moab, and at a little distance from its borders, Seetzen relates that there are many families living in caverns; and he actually designates them "the inhabitants of the rocks."[3] And at the distance of a few miles from the ruined site of Heshbon, "there are many artificial caves in a large range of perpendicular cliffs, in some of which are chambers and small sleeping apartments."[4] While the

[1] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 381.
[2] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 344.
[3] Seetzen's Travels, p. 26. See Monthly Review, vol. lxxi. p. 405.
[4] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 473.

cities are desolate without any to dwell therein, the rocks are tenanted. But whether *flocks lie down* in the former, *without any to make them afraid*,—or whether men are to be found dwelling in the latter, and are *like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth*,—the wonderful transition, in either case, and the close accordance, in both, of the fact to the prediction, assuredly mark it, in characters that may be visible to the purblind mind, as the word of that God before whom the darkness of futurity is as light, and without whom a sparrow cannot fall unto the ground.[1]

And although chargeable with the impropriety of being somewhat out of place, it may not be here altogether improper to remark, that, demonstrative as all these clear predictions and coincident facts are of the inspiration of the Scriptures, it cannot but be gratifying to every lover of his kind, when he contemplates that desolation, caused by many sins, and fraught with many

[1] Another prediction respecting the dwellers in Moab ought not perhaps to be passed over in silence, although the terms in which it is expressed are not so clear and unambiguous as those to which the observations in the text are confined, and although it may have met its primary fulfilment in a much earlier age. Yet it is so intelligible, that the fact, to which it bears an unrestrained application, may be left as its sole and adequate exposition: and the continued truth of the prophecy greatly strengthens, instead of weakening the evidence of its inspiration. And how is Moab broken down and spoiled, when, in lieu of the arrogancy and exceeding pride and haughtiness of its ancient inhabitants, the following description is characteristic of the wanderers who now possess it! "In the valley of Wale," which is situated in the immediate vicinity of the river *Arnon*, into which the Wale flows, Burckhardt observed "a large party of Arabs Shererat encamped—Bedouins of the Arabian desert, who resort hither in summer for pasturage." Being oppressed and hemmed in by other Arab tribes, "they *wander about in misery*, have very few horses, and are not able to feed any flocks of sheep or goats.—Their tents are very miserable; both men and women go almost naked, the former being only covered round the waist, and the women wearing nothing but a loose shirt hanging in rags about them." *Moab shall be a derision. As a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of* ARNON. (Burckhardt's Travels, pp. 370, 371; Jer. xlviii. 89; Isa. xvi. 2.)

miseries, which the wickedness of man has wrought, and which the prescience of God revealed, to know that all these prophecies, while they mingle the voice of wailing with that of denunciation, are the word of that God, who, although he suffers not iniquity to pass unpunished, overrules evil for good, and makes the wrath of man to praise him, and who in the midst of judgment can remember mercy. And, reasoning merely from the "uniform experience" (to borrow a term, and draw an argument from Hume) of the truth of the prophecies already fulfilled, the unprejudiced mind will at once perceive the full force of the truth derived from experience,[1] and acknowledge that it would be a rejection of the authority of reason as well as of revelation, to mistrust the truth of that prophetic affirmation of resuscitating and redeeming import, respecting Ammon and Moab, which is the last of the series, and which alone now awaits futurity to stamp it with the brilliant and crowning seal of its testimony. "I will bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the Lord.[2] I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.[3] The remnant of my people shall possess them.[4] They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."[5]

[1] "Being determined by custom to transfer the past to the future in all our inferences; where the past has been entirely regular and uniform, we expect the event with the greatest assurance, and leave no room for any contrary supposition." (Hume's Essay on Probability, vol. ii. p. 61.)

[2] Jer. xlviii. 47. [3] Jer. xlix. 6. [4] Zeph. ii. 9.

[5] Isa. lxi. 4, lviii. 12; Ezek. xxxvi. 33, 36.

IDUMEA.

But a heavier and irreversible doom was denounced against the land of Edom or Idumea; and the testimony of an infidel was the first to show how it has been realized. That testimony, as forming an exposition of itself, may, in a primary view of them, be subjoined to the prophecies, and must have its due influence on every unbiassed mind. There are numerous prophecies respecting Idumea, that bear a literal interpretation, however hyperbolical they may appear. "My sword shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be a habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr (or hairy creature) shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell

therein.[1] Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him the time that I will visit him. If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning-grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself. Behold, they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken: and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it. I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.[2] Thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman.[3] The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out my hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate.[4] Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out, and him that return-

[1] Isa. xxxiv. 5, 10—17.
[2] Jer. xlix. 7—10, 12, 13, 15—18.
[3] Ezek. xxv. 13.
[4] Ezek. xxxv. 1—4.

eth.[1] I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return.[2] When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate. Thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it; and they shall know that I am the Lord.[3] Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.[4] For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.[5] Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom, I have made thee small among the heathen, thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high. Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions, but there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau.[6] I laid the mountains of Esau and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them the border of wickedness."[7] Is there any country, once inhabited and opulent, so utterly desolate? There is, and that land is Idumea. The territory of the descendants of Esau affords as miraculous a demonstration of the inspiration of the Scriptures, as the fate of the children of Israel.

Idumea was situated to the south of Judea and of Moab; it bordered on the east with Arabia Petræa, under which name it was included in the latter part of its history, and it extended southward to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. A single extract from the Travels of Volney will be found to be equally illustrative of the prophecy and of the fact. "This country *has not been visited by any traveller*, but it well merits such an attention: for from the report of the Arabs of Bakir, and the inhabitants of Gaza, who frequently go to Maan and

[1] Ezek. xxxv. 7. [2] Ezek. xxxv. 9. [3] Ezek. xxxv. 14, 15.
[4] Joel iii. 19. [5] Amos i. 11. [6] Obad. 1—3, 8, 17, 18.
[7] Mal. i. 3, 4.

Karak, on the road of the pilgrims, there are to the south-east of the lake Asphaltites, (Dead Sea,) *within three days' journey*, upwards of thirty ruined towns *absolutely deserted.* Several of them have large edifices, with columns that may have belonged to ancient temples, or at least to Greek churches. The Arabs sometimes make use of them to fold their cattle in; but in general avoid them on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm. We cannot be surprised at these traces of ancient population, when we recollect that this was the country of the Nabatheans, the most powerful of the Arabs, and of the *Idumeans*, who, at the *time of the destruction of Jerusalem*, were almost as numerous as the Jews, as appears from Josephus, who informs us, that on the first rumour of the march of Titus against Jerusalem, thirty thousand Idumeans instantly assembled, and threw themselves into that city for its defence. It appears that besides the advantages of being under a tolerably good government, these districts enjoyed a considerable share of the commerce of Arabia and India, which increased their industry and population. We know that as far back as the time of Solomon, the cities of Astioum Gaber (Esion Gaber) and Ailah (Eloth) were highly frequented marts. These towns were situated on the adjacent gulf of the Red Sea, where we still find the latter yet retaining its name, and perhaps the former in that of El Akaba, or the end (of the sea.) These two places are in the hands of the Bedouins, who, being destitute of a navy and commerce, do not inhabit them. But the pilgrims report that there is at El Akaba a wretched fort.[1] The Idumeans, from whom the Jews took only their ports at intervals, must have found in them a great source of wealth and population. It even appears that the Idumeans rivalled the Tyrians, who also possessed a town, the name of which is unknown, on the coast of Hedjaz, in the desert of Tih, and the city of Faran, and, without doubt, El-Tor, which served it by way of port. From this place, the caravans might reach

[1] This fort is at present in the possession of the Pasha of Egypt.

Palestine and Judea" (through Idumea) "in eight or ten days. This route, which is no longer than that from Suez to Cairo, is infinitely shorter than that from Aleppo to Bassorah."[1] Evidence, which must have been undesigned, which cannot be suspected of partiality, and which no illustration can strengthen, and no ingenuity pervert, is thus borne to the truth of the most wonderful prophecies. That the Idumeans were a populous and powerful nation long posterior to the delivery of the prophecies: that they possessed a tolerably good government, (even in the estimation of Volney;) that Idumea contained many cities; that these cities are now absolutely deserted, and that their ruins swarm with enormous scorpions; that it was a commercial nation, and possessed highly frequented marts; that it forms a shorter route than an ordinary one to India, and yet that it had not been visited by any traveller; are facts all recorded, or proved to a wish, by this able but unconscious commentator.[2]

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 344—346.

[2] *None shall pass through it for ever and ever.* This prophecy has been understood in its most literal and absolute sense as affirming that in all time to come no one should ever be able to pass through this land; but even those who adopt this interpretation must necessarily admit that it is subject to certain limitations. When taken in its most literal sense, it can be viewed only as referring to strangers, and not to the natives of the desert, who have been in the habit from time immemorial of traversing the country; but even in this limited sense the interpretation, we conceive, is very unsafe, and not quite tenable consistently with events which have already taken place. We grant that for many ages Edom remained unvisited; her sands were trodden only by the foot of the Bedouin, and the eye of the stranger never beheld the illustrious monuments which her dark mountains conceal. The gates of the country, though standing wide open, appeared to be as completely barred against the natives of other lands, as if the same sword which guarded of old the doors of Eden had flamed before the mountain passes of Seir. But now these gates have been entered, the country has been explored and traversed in every direction, and even the veil of Wady Mousa has been lifted up, and the monuments of that mysterious valley revealed to the eyes of Europe. Nevertheless, the prediction of the prophet has received a striking fulfilment. Amid the mountains of Edom stood

Idumea was a kingdom previous to Israel, having been governed first by dukes and princes, afterwards by eight successive kings, and again by dukes, before there a city which, in ancient times, was the centre of the trade of the world. To this city the eastern tribes transported the merchandise of India and Arabia; and from this point it was again sent forth to the nations of the west. To this trade, and the great and continual intercourse which it occasioned between all countries and Edom, the prophet unquestionably refers. His prediction, "I will cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth," simply imports, we conceive, the entire annihilation of that traffic. And never did prophecy receive a more striking fulfilment.

We have already contemplated the small beginnings from which arose the magnificent commerce of Idumea. The early Edomite freighted his bark with the produce of Arabia, and having launched it on the bosom of the Red Sea, guided it along the shore to Ethiopia and Egypt, whence he returned laden with such necessaries as his own country did not supply. This trade gradually increased, till at last, as Strabo informs us, armies of camels were employed in conveying it through Edom to the Mediterranean. At that time Edom was the great thoroughfare of the world. Petra was the mart of nations. To this city long lines of caravans might be seen directing their course from the Persian gulf, from all points of Arabia, and from the shores of the Red Sea; here they all met, and deposited their wares; which other caravans conveyed to the shores of the Mediterranean, over whose waters they were transported to the nations of the west. Under the reign of the Greeks, the commerce of Idumea appears to have reached its height, and the vast wealth which it poured into the country is attested by the numbers of its people and the splendours of its capital. The conquests of the Romans, which opened new channels of trade, disturbed the commercial relations of Idumea. The traffic of the Persian gulf, which now began to ascend the Euphrates, was carried across the Desert at a much higher point than Petra. Palmyra rose with unrivalled splendour in the midst of sands; and from this period, the Nabathean trade began rapidly to decline, their capital to be deserted, and their people to return to their former pastoral and wandering habits. The discoveries of the Portuguese gave the death-blow to their commerce. The merchandise of India is now carried into Europe by sea; and many centuries have elapsed since a single caravan or a solitary trader was seen passing out or returning to this land. Who but Omniscience could have foreseen the discoveries to which future ages were to give birth, and the effects these discoveries were to produce in opening new channels of trade, and filling with desolation and silence the ancient and once crowded thoroughfare of Edom? And when we think that there is not the least likelihood of the commerce of the world ever reverting to its old channel,

reigned any king over the children of Israel.[1] Its fertility and early cultivation are implied not only in the blessings of Esau, whose dwelling was to be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; but also in the condition proposed by Moses to the Edomites, when he solicited a passage for the Israelites through their borders, "that they would not pass through the fields or through the vineyards;" and also in the great wealth, especially in the multitudes of flocks and herds, recorded as possessed by an individual inhabitant of that country, at a period, in all probability, even more remote.[2] The Idumeans were, without doubt, both an opulent and a powerful people. They often contended with the Israelites, and entered into a league with their other enemies against them. In the reign of David they were indeed subdued and greatly oppressed, and many of them were dispersed throughout the neighbouring countries, particularly Phœnicia and Egypt. But during the decline of the kingdom of Judah, and for many years previous to its extinction, they encroached upon the territories of the Jews, and extended their dominion over the south-western part of Judea. Though no excellence whatever be now attached to its name, which exists only in past history, Idumea, including perhaps Judea, as Reland has shown, was then not without the praise of the first of Roman poets.

Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.
Virg. Georg. iii. 12.

And of Lucan, (Pharsal. iii. 216.)

Arbustis palmarum dives Idume.

But Idumea, as a kingdom, can lay claim to a higher renown than either the abundance of its flocks, or the excellence of its palm trees. The celebrated city of

we see that Jehovah has not only fulfilled the prediction in cutting off from Edom him that passeth out, and him that returneth, but that, in all time to come, *none shall pass through it for ever and ever.*—*Wylie's Modern Judea.*

[1] Genesis xxxvi. 31—43.

[2] Gen. xxvii. 39; Num. xx. 17; Job xlii. 12.

Petra (so named by the Greeks, and so worthy of its name, on account both of its rocky situation and vicinity) was situated within the patrimonial territory of the Edomites. There is distinct and positive evidence that it was a city of Edom,[1] and the metropolis of the Nabatheans,[2] whom Strabo expressly identifies with the Idumeans—possessors of the same country, and subject to the same laws.[3] "Petra," to use the words of Dr. Vincent, by whom the state of its ancient commerce was described before its ruins were discovered, "is the capital of Edom or Seir, the Idumea or Arabia Petræa of the Greeks, the Nabatea, considered both by geographers, historians, and poets, as the source of all the precious commodities of the east."[4] "The caravans, in all ages, from Minea, in the interior of Arabia, and from Gerrha on the Gulf of Persia, from Hadramaut on the ocean, and some even from Sabea or Yemen, appear to have pointed to Petra as a common centre; and from Petra the trade seems again to have branched out into every direction, to Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, through Arsinoe, Gaza, Tyre, Jerusalem, Damascus, and a variety of subordinate routes that all terminated on the Mediterranean. There is every proof that is requisite to show that the Tyrians and Sidonians were the first merchants who introduced the produce of India to all the nations which encircled the Mediterranean; so there is the strongest evidence to prove that the Tyrians obtained all their commodities from Arabia. But if Arabia was the centre of this commerce, Petra[5] was the point to which all

[1] Petra being afterwards more particularly noticed, some quotations from ancient authors respecting it may here be subjoined. Πετρα πολις εν γη Εδωμ της Αραβιας. (Eusebii Onomast.) "Petra civitas Arabiæ in terra Edom." Hieron. tom. iii. p. 59. Vide Relandi Palestina, tom. 1, p. 70.

[2] Μητροπολις δε των Ναβαταιων εστιν ἡ Πετρα καλουμενη.—Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 779, edit. Paris, 1620, ed. Falc. p. 1106.

[3] Ναβαταιοι δε εισιν οἱ Ἰδουμαιοι. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 760, edit. Falcon p. 1081.

[4] Vincent's Commerce of the Ancients, vol. ii. p. 263.

[5] Agatharchides Huds. p. 57. Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. vi. cap. xxviii quoted by Vincent, ibid. p. 262.

the Arabians tended from the three sides of their vast peninsula."[1] "The name of this capital, in all the various languages in which it occurs, implies a rock, and as such it is described in the Scriptures, in Strabo, and Al-Edrissi."[2]

About 800 years before Christ, Amaziah, the king of Judea, took Selah, (or Petra, both names alike signifying a rock,) after having slain 10,000 Edomites.[3] Five hundred years thereafter, it withstood the repeated assaults of Demetrius, who marched suddenly against it, to take it by surprise: and he who afterwards entered Babylon, retreated from before the capital of Edom.[4] Petra, subsequently to its subjugation by the Nabathean Arabs, was termed the capital of Arabia, or more properly of Arabia Petræa: and a race of kings who reigned there under the names of Obodas and Aretas, were each successively designated 'the king of Arabia.' Three hundred years after the last of the prophets, and nearly a century before the Christian era, Alexander Janneus, king of Judea, having taken several cities of the Idumeans and neighbouring nations, was defeated by Obodas, lost his army, and scarcely escaped with his life. Aretas, the successor of Obodas, who next reigned at Petra, 'a person very illustrious,' (επιδοξος,) discomfited and slew Antiochus Dionysius, king of Syria; and Cœlesyria was added to his dominions. When Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander, was dispossessed of his kingdom by his elder brother Aristobulus, Antipater, an Idumean of great wealth, the father of Herod the Great, urged him to flee for aid to 'the king of Arabia,' and conducted him to 'Petra, where the palace of Aretas was.'[5] On the promised restoration by Antipater, as soon as he should be repossessed of his kingdom, of the twelve cities and territory

[1] Vincent's Commerce of the Ancients, vol. ii. pp. 260—262.
[2] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 264.
[3] 2 Kings xiv. 7.
[4] Diod. Sic. tom. viii. p. 416. Prideaux.
[5] Εις Πετραν ὅπου βασιλεια ην του Αρετα. Joseph. Ant. lib. xiv. c. 1, § 4.

which his father had taken[1] from the Arabs or Nabatheans, Aretas, at the head of 50,000 men, horse and foot, marched against Aristobulus, conquered him in battle, and, advancing with all his army, entered Jerusalem, and having united the forces of the Jews with his own, pressed vigorously the siege of the temple, which was only raised by the advance of the Romans to the aid of Aristobulus.[2] At a period posterior as well as prior to the commencement of the Christian era, there always reigned at Petra, as Strabo relates, a king of the royal lineage, with whom a prince or procurator, denominated his brother, was associated in the government.[3] In the beginning of the second century, Petra, though its independence was lost, was still the capital of a Roman province, or the reputed metropolis of Arabia; and, as its coins attested, the emperor Adrian added his name to that of the city:[4] it long continued to be the capital of the third Palestine—*Palestina tertia sive salutaris;* and, as such, was also the metropolitan see of fifteen cities pertaining to that province.[5]

The ancient state of Idumea cannot in the present day be so clearly ascertained from the records respecting it which can be gleaned from history, whether sacred or profane, as by the wonderful and imperishable remains of its capital city, and by "the traces of many towns and villages," which indisputably show that "it must once have been thickly inhabited."[6] It not only can admit of no dispute, that the cities of Idumea subsisted in a very different state from that absolute desolation in which, long prior to the period of its reality, it was represented in the prophetic vision; but there are pro-

[1] Viz. Medaba, Naballo, Livias, Tharabasa, Agalla, Athone, Zoara, Oronæ, Marissa, Rydda, Lyssa, and Oryba. Joseph. Ant. lib. xiv. c. 1, § 4.

[2] Joseph. Ant. c. ii. § i. ed. Falc. p. 1107. [3] Strabo, p. 779.

[4] Petra est Arabiæ metropolis, quo spectant nummi, in quibus ΑΔΡΙΑΝΗ ΠΕΤΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙC legitur, &c. Vide Relandi Palest. tom. ii. p. 931.

[5] Relandi Palest. tom. i. p. 315, &c.

[6] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 436.

phecies regarding it, especially those in the thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, that have yet a prospective view, and which refer to the time when "the children of Israel shall possess their possessions," or to "the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." But, dangerous as it is to explore the land of Idumea, and difficult to ascertain these existing facts, and precise circumstances, which form the strongest features of its desolate aspect, (and that ought to be the subject of scientific as well as of religious inquiry,) enough has been discovered to show that the sentence against it, though fulfilled by the agency of nature and of man, is precisely such as was first recorded in the annals of inspiration.

Edom shall be a desolation. From generation to generation it shall lie waste, &c. Judea, Ammon, and Moab exhibit so abundantly the remains and the means of an exuberant fertility, that the wonder arises in the reflecting mind, how the barbarity of man could have so effectually counteracted, for so "many generations," the prodigality of nature. But such is Edom's desolation, that the first sentiment of *astonishment* on the contemplation of it is, how a wide-extended region, now diversified by the strongest features of desert wildness, could ever have been adorned with cities, or tenanted for ages by a powerful and opulent people. Its present aspect would belie its ancient history, were not that history corroborated by "the many vestiges of former cultivation," by the remains of walls and paved roads, and by the ruins of cities still existing in this ruined country.

The total cessation of its commerce; the artificial irrigation of its valleys wholly neglected; the destruction of all the cities, and the continued spoliation of the country by the Arabs, while aught remained that they could destroy; the permanent exposure, for ages, of the soil, unsheltered by its ancient groves, and unprotected by any covering from the scorching rays of the sun; the unobstructed encroachments of the desert, and of the drifted sands from *the borders of the Red Sea*, the consequent absorption of the water of the springs and stream-

lets during summer; are causes which have all combined their baneful operation in rendering Edom *most desolate, the desolation of desolations.* Volney's account is sufficiently descriptive of the desolation which now reigns over Idumea; and the information which Seetzen derived at Jerusalem respecting it, is of similar import.[1] He was told "that at the distance of two days' journey and a half from Hebron, he would find considerable ruins of the ancient city of Abde, and that for all the rest of the journey he would see *no place of habitation;* he would meet only with a few tribes of wandering Arabs." From the borders of Edom, Captains Irby and Mangles beheld a boundless extent of desert view, which they had hardly ever seen equalled for singularity and grandeur. And the following extract, descriptive of what Burckhardt actually witnessed in different parts of Edom, cannot be more graphically abbreviated than in the words of the prophet. Of its eastern boundary, and of the adjoining part of Arabia Petræa, strictly so called, Burckhardt writes:—"It might with truth be called Petræa, not only on account of its rocky mountains, but also of the elevated plain already described,[2] which is so much covered with stones, especially flints, that it may with great propriety be called a stony desert, although susceptible of culture: in many places it is overgrown with wild herbs, and must once have been thickly inhabited; for the traces of many towns and villages are met with on both sides of the Hadj road, between Maan and Akaba, as well as between Maan and the plains of the Hauran, in which direction are also many springs. At present all this country is a desert, and Maan (Teman[3]) is the only inhabited place in it.[4] *I will stretch out my hand against thee, O Mount Seir, and will make thee most desolate. I will stretch out my hand upon Edom, and will make it desolate from Teman,* &c.

1 Seetzen's Travels, p. 46.
2 Sheera, (Seir,) the territory of the Edomites, pp. 410, 435.
3 See map prefixed to Burckhardt's Travels.
4 Burckhardt's Travels, p. 436.

In the interior of Idumea, where the ruins of some of its ancient cities are still visible, and in the extensive valley which reaches from the Red to the Dead Sea, the appearance of which must now be totally and sadly changed from what it was, "the whole plain presented to the view an expanse of shifting sands, whose surface was broken by innumerable undulations and low hills. The same appears to have been brought from *the shores of the Red Sea*, by the southern winds; and the Arabs told me that the valleys continue to present the same appearance beyond the latitude of Wady Mousa. In some parts of the valley the sand is very deep, and there is not the slightest appearance of a road, or of any work of human art. A few trees grow among the sand-hills, but the depth of sand precludes *all vegetation* of herbage."[1] *If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau* BARE. *Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.* "On ascending the western plain on a higher level than that of Arabia, we had before us an immense expanse of dreary country, entirely covered with black flints, and here and there some hilly chains rising from the plain."[2] *I will stretch out upon Idumea the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.*

Of the remains of ancient cities still exposed to view in different places throughout Idumea, Burckhardt describes "the ruins of a large town, of which nothing remains but broken walls and heaps of stones; the ruins of several villages in its vicinity;[3] the ruins of an ancient city, consisting of large heaps of hewn blocks of silicious stone; the extensive ruins of Gherandel, Arindela, an ancient town of Palæstina Tertia."[4] "The following ruined places are situated in *Djebal Shera*, (Mount Seir,) to the S. and S. W. of Wady Mousa: Kalaat, Djerba, Basta, Eyl, Ferdakh, Anyk, Bir el Bey-

[1] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 442.
[2] Ibid. pp. 444, 445.
[3] Ibid. p. 418.
[4] Ibid. p. 441.

tar, Shemakh, and Syk. Of the towns[1] laid down in D'Anville's map, Thoana excepted, no *traces* remain."[2] Laborde passed the ruins of Elana, a town in Wady (valley) Pambouchebe, of another in Wady Sabra, where there are the ruins of a theatre and several temples; and of Ameime, where there are the remains of numerous cisterns excavated from the rock, into which the water flowed by an aqueduct nine miles in length. *I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate. O Mount Seir, I will make thee perpetual desolations; and thy cities shall not return.*

Malachi, the last of the prophets, who wrote two hundred years after Ezekiel, and above three hundred after Isaiah, describes the heritage of Esau as *laid waste for the dragons of the wilderness.* But he adds, *Whereas Edom saith, we are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord, They shall build, but I will throw down.* In recording the invasion of Demetrius, about three hundred years before the Christian era, into the land of Edom, Diodorus describes the country as desert, and the inhabitants as living without houses; nor does he mention any city in that region but Petra alone. Yet the names of some of the cities of Arabia Petræa, enumerated by Josephus, as existing at the time when the Romans invaded Palestine —the names of eighteen cities of Palæstina Tertia, of which Petra was the capital, and the metropolitan see, in the times of the Lower Empire—and the towns laid down in D'Anville's map, together with the subsisting ruins of towns in Edom, specified by Burckhardt, and also by Laborde—give proof that Edom, after having been impoverished, did return and build the desolate places; even as "the ruined towns and places," still visible and named, show that though the desolate places

[1] The names of these towns, in the map referred to, are Elusa, Tamara, Zoara, Thoana, Necta, Phenon, Suzuma, Carcaria, Oboda, Berzumma, Lysa, Gypsaria, Zodocata, Gerasa, Havara, Præsidium ad Dianam, Œlana, Asion Gaber.

[2] Burckhardt's Travels, pp. 443, 444.

were *built again*, according to the prophecy, they have, as likewise foretold, been *thrown down*, and are "ruined places," lying in utter desolation.

While the cities of Idumea, in general, are thus most desolate, and while the ruins themselves are as indiscriminate as they are undefined, in the prediction, (there being nothing discoverable, as there was nothing foretold, but their excessive desolation, and that they shall not return,) there is one striking exception to this promiscuous desolation, which is alike singled out by the inspired prophet and by the scientific traveller.

Burckhardt gives a description of no ordinary interest, of the site of an ancient city which he visited, the ruins of which not only attest its ancient splendour, but they "are entitled to rank among the most curious remains of ancient art." Though the city is desolate, the monuments of its opulence and power are durable. These are, a channel on each side of the river, for conveying the water to the city; numerous tombs; above two hundred and fifty sepulchres, or excavations; many mausoleums, one in particular of colossal dimensions, in perfect preservation, and a work of immense labour, containing a chamber sixteen paces square, and above twenty-five in height, with a colonnade in front thirty-five feet high, crowned with a pediment highly ornamented, &c.; two large truncated pyramids, and a theatre with all its benches, capable of containing about three thousand spectators, ALL *cut out of the rock*. In some places these sepulchres are excavated one over the other, and the side of the mountain is so perpendicular that *it seems impossible to approach the uppermost*, no path whatever being visible. "The ground is covered with heaps of hewn stones, foundations of buildings, fragments of columns and vestiges of paved streets, all clearly indicating that a large city once existed here. On the left bank of the river is a rising ground, extending westward for nearly three quarters of a mile, entirely covered with similar remains. On the right bank, where the ground is more elevated, ruins of the same description

are to be seen. There are also the remains of a palace and of several temples. In the eastern *cliff* there are upwards of fifty separate sepulchres close to each other."[3] These are not the symbols of a feeble race, nor of a people that were to perish utterly. But a judgment was denounced against the strongholds of Edom. The prophetic threatening has not proved an empty boast, and it could not have been the word of an uninspired mortal. *I will make thee small among the heathen. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation.*

These descriptions given by the prophet and by the observer are so analogous, and the precise locality of the scene, from its peculiar and characteristic features, so identified,—and yet the application of the prophecy to the fact so remote from the thoughts or view of Burckhardt, as to be altogether overlooked,—that his single delineation of the ruins of the chief (and assuredly the strongest and best fortified) city of Edom was deemed in the first edition of this treatise, and in the terms of the preceding paragraph, an illustration of the prophecy, alike adequate and legitimate. And though deprecating any allusion whatever of a personal nature, and earnest only for the elucidation of the truth, the author yet trusts that he may here be permitted to disclaim the credit of having been the first to assign to the prediction its wonderful and appropriate fulfilment; and it is with no slight gratification that he is now enabled to adduce higher evidence than any opinion of his own, and to state, that the self-same prophecy has been applied by others—with the Bible in their hands, and with the very scene before them—to the self-same spot. Yet it may be added, that this coincident application of the prophecy, without any collusion, and without the possibility at the time of any interchange of sentiment, affords, at

[3] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, pp. 422—432.

least, a strong presumptive evidence of the accuracy of the application, and of the truth of the prophecy; and it may well lead to some reflection in the mind of any reader, if skepticism has not barred every avenue against conviction.

On entering the pass which conducts to the theatre of Petra, Captains Irby and Mangles remark;—"The ruins of the city here burst on the view, in their full grandeur, shut in on the opposite side by barren craggy precipices, from which numerous ravines and valleys branch out in all directions; the sides of the mountains, covered with an endless variety of excavated tombs and private dwellings, (*O thou that dwellest in the clefts of* THE ROCK, &c.—Jer. xlix. 16,) presented altogether the most singular scene we ever beheld."

In still farther confirmation of the identity of the site, and the accuracy of the application, it may be repeated in the words of Dr. Vincent, that "the name of this capital, in all the various languages in which it occurs, implies a rock, and as such it is described in the Scriptures, in Strabo, and Al Edrissi."[1] And in a note he enumerates among the various names having all the same signification—Sela, a rock, (the very word here used in the original,) Petra, a rock, (the Greek name, which has precisely the same signification,) and The Rock, pre-eminently—expressly referring to this passage of Scripture.[2] Petræa, according to Bochart, no mean authority, was so called from its metropolis Petra, of which the Hebrew name was Selah, and the Arabic, Hagar; Selah being the very same among the Hebrews, and Hagar among the Arabians, as Petra among the Greeks; this name was given to the city because rocky mountains overhung it, of which the Arabian geographer states that houses are there excavated in the rock.[3] This

[1] Commerce of the Ancients, vol. ii. p. 264.

[2] See Blaney, *in loco.*

[3] Cum Petræa dicatur—a metropoli *Petra*, cujus Hebræum nomen Selah. 2 Kings xiv. 7, et Isa. xvi. 1, et Arabicum Hagar, *Geograph. Nub. Clim.* iii. part. 5. Hebræis autem Selah et Arabibus Hagar id ipsum sunt quod Græcis Petra; atque hoc nomen

testimony, however high the authority, is yet enhanced by the fact, that it was given long before the ruins of Petra were discovered, or the prediction applied to the facts.

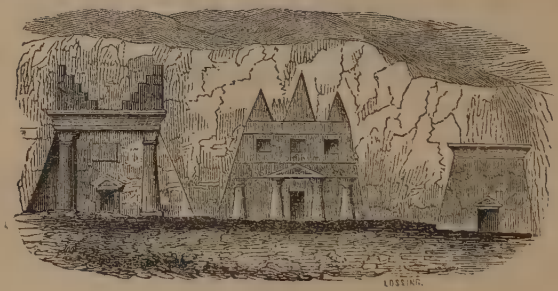
Captains Irby and Mangles, having, together with Mr. Bankes and Mr. Legh, spent two days in diligently examining them, give a more particular detail of the ruins of Petra than Burckhardt's account supplied; and the more full the description, the more precise and wonderful does the prophecy appear. Near to the place where they entered Wady Mousa, "the high land was covered upon both its sides, and on its summits, with lines and solid masses of dry wall. The former appeared to be traces of ancient cultivation, the solid ruins seemed to be only the remains of towers for watching in harvest and vintage-time. The whole neighbourhood of the spot bears similar traces of former industry; all which seem to indicate the vicinity of a great metropolis."[1] A narrow and circuitous defile, surrounded on each side by precipitous or perpendicular rocks, varying from four hundred to seven hundred feet in altitude, and forming, for two miles, "a sort of subterranean passage,"

urbi inditum, quia illi imminent saxosi montes de quibus ita Geographus Arabs—Hagar est arx pulchre sita inter montes—*suntque ibi domus excisæ in petra.* Hos montes Arabica voce Agar, id est, Petram, appellat Paulus, Gal. iv. 25, tanquam urbi cognomines. Bochart Phaleg. lib. iv. c. xxvii. c. 275, 276. Edit. Lugd. Bat. 1712.

It may be interesting, if not instructive, to the Christian reader, in reference to the *allegory* spoken of by the apostle, (Galatians iv. 25,) to add, as Josephus has related, and as the name imports, that the Nabatheans, who, after the Edomites possessed for so long a period Petra as their capital, were the descendants of Nebaioth, the first-born of Ishmael, the son of Hagar. Its desolate site in the present day, and the unrepealable decree of perpetual desolation which rests on Edom *alone*, may be deemed a farther exposition of the allegory. And that *allegory* itself, which the future state of the world has yet fully to expound, would prove to be written for instruction in righteousness, if men were hence led, from its prophetic truth and spiritual application, to consider the different character and final fate of the children of the bond-woman and of the free.

[1] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 402.

opens on the east the way to the ruins of Petra. The rocks, or rather hills, then diverge on either side, and leave an oblong space, where once stood the metropolis of Edom, deceived by its terribleness, where now lies a waste of ruins, encircled on every side, save on the north-east alone, by stupendous cliffs, which still show how the pride and labour of art tried there to vie with the sublimity of nature. Along the borders of these cliffs, detached masses of rock, numerous and lofty, have been wrought into sepulchres, the interior of which is excavated into chambers, while the exterior has been cut from the live rock into the forms of towers, with pilasters, and successive bands of frieze and entablature, wings, recesses, figures of animals, and columns.[1] The subjoined cut may convey an idea of some of these singular excavations.

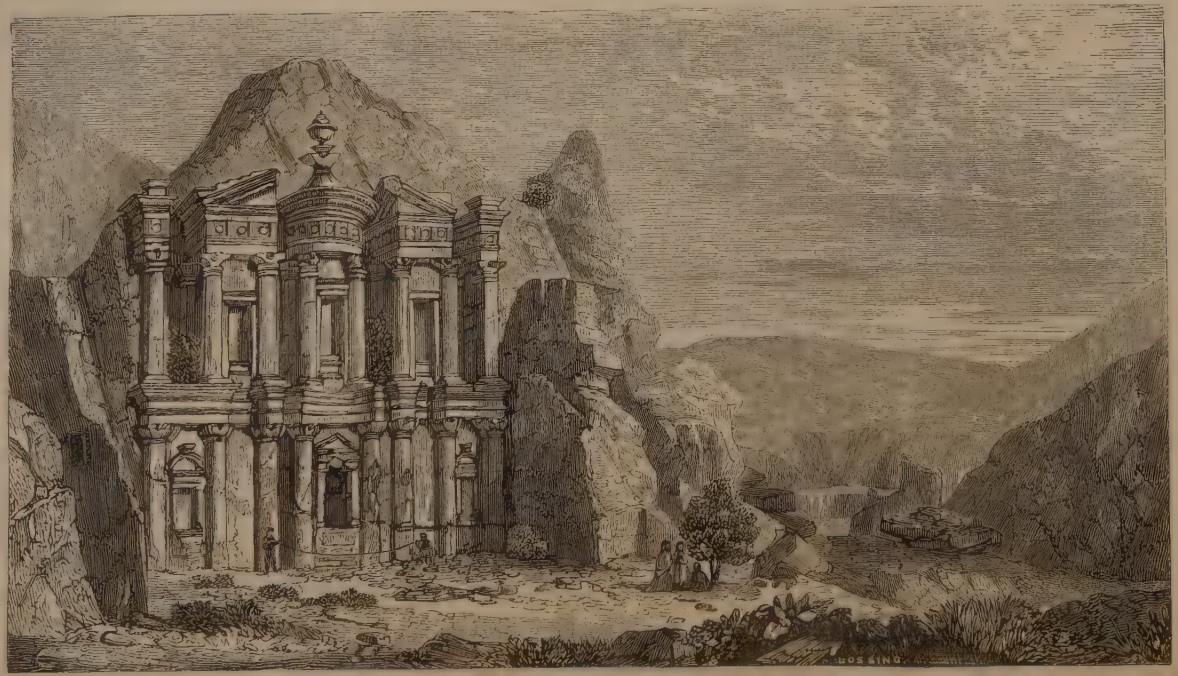


Yet, numerous as they are, these form but a part of "the vast necropolis of Petra." "Tombs present themselves, not only in every avenue to the city, and upon every precipice that surrounds it, but even intermixed almost promiscuously with its public and domestic edifices; the natural features of the defile grew more and more imposing at every step, and the excavations and sculpture more frequent on both sides, till it presented at last a continued street of tombs." The base of the cliffs, wrought out into all the symmetry and regularity

[1] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 407.

INTERIOR OF TOMB.

EXTERIOR OF TOMB.



VIEW OF A LARGE TOMB CALLED EL DEIR.

of art, with colonnades and pedestals, and ranges of corridors adhering to the perpendicular surface; flights of steps chiselled out of the rock; grottos, "which are certainly not sepulchral;" some excavated residences of large dimensions, in one of which is a single chamber, sixty feet in length, and of a breadth proportioned; other dwellings of inferior note, particularly abundant in one defile leading to the city, the steep sides of which contain a sort of excavated suburb, accessible by flights of steps; niches, sometimes thirty feet in excavated height, with altars for votive offerings, or with pyramids, columns, or obelisks: a bridge across a chasm now apparently inaccessible: some small pyramids hewn out of the rock on the summit of the heights; horizontal grooves for the conveyance of water, cut in the face of the rock, and even across the architectural fronts of some of the excavations; and, in short, "the rocks hollowed out into innumerable chambers of different dimensions, whose entrances are variously, richly, and often fantastically decorated with every imaginable order of architecture;"[1]—all united not only form one of the most singular scenes that the eye of man ever looked upon, or the imagination painted—a group of wonders perhaps unparalleled in their kind—but also give indubitable proof, both that in the land of Edom there was a city where human ingenuity and energy and power must have been exerted for many ages, and to so great a degree as to have well entitled it to be noted for its strength or *terribleness*, and that the description given of it by the prophets of Israel was as strictly literal as the prediction respecting it is true. "The barren state of the country, together with the desolate condition of the city, without a single human being living near it, seem," in the words of those who were spectators of the scene, "strongly to verify the judgment denounced against it."[2] *O thou*

[1] Captains Irby and Mangles's Travels, pp. 407—437; Macmichael's Journey, pp. 228, 229.

[2] Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 439.

that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, &c. Also Edom shall be a desolation, &c.

Of all the ruins of Petra, the mausoleums and sepulchres are among the most remarkable, and they give the clearest indication of ancient and long-continued royalty, and of courtly grandeur. Their immense number corroborates the accounts given of their successive kings and princes by Moses and Strabo, though a period of eighteen hundred years intervened between the dates of their respective records concerning them. The structure of the sepulchres also shows that many of them are of a more recent date. "Great," says Burckhardt, "must have been the opulence of a city which could dedicate such monuments to the memory of its rulers."[1] But the long line of the kings and of the nobles of Idumea, has for ages been cut off; they are without any representative now, without any memorial but the multitude and the magnificence of their unvisited sepulchres. *They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom*, (or rather, they shall call, or summon, the nobles thereof,) *but there shall be no kingdom there, and all her princes shall be nothing.*

Amidst the mausoleums and sepulchres, the remains of temples or palaces, and the multiplicity of tombs, which all form as it were the grave of Idumea, where its ancient splendour is interred, there are edifices, the Roman and Grecian architecture of which decides that they were *built* long posterior to the era of the prophets.[2] *They shall build, but I will throw down.* The description given by Volney, and depending for its accuracy on the authority of Arabs, formed till very recently the only account of the modern state of Idumea; and though the testimony was recorded in a manner and came through a channel the most unsuspected possible, yet the evidence was not sufficiently direct or discriminating to mark, as Volney had otherwise done, the exact, prophetic, and characteristic features of the scene. The

[1] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 425. [2] Ibid.

interesting details, from personal observation, communicated by Burckhardt, and subsequently by Captains Irby and Mangles, rescued the subject from obscurity, and brought to light the remarkable fact of the ruins of a city, surrounded by excavated rocks, in the midst of the desert.

When, in the streets of Jerusalem, the people shouted hosannahs to the Son of David, and while some of the Pharisees among the people said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples, he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And in an infidel age, while many modern cities and nations disowned the authority of the God of Israel and disbelieved his word, those of ancient times stood forth anew before the world, like witnesses arisen from the dead, to show the authority, the power, and the truth of his word over them, and to raise a warning and instructive voice to the *cities of the nations*, lest they too should become the monuments of the wrath which they have defied. And when men would not hear of hosannahs to the Son of David, or of divine honours to the name of Christ, deserts immediately spake and rocks cried out, and, responding to the voice of the prophets, testified of them who testified of Jesus. The capital of Edom, as well as the capitals of other ancient kingdoms, was heard of again; and its rocks now send forth a voice that may well reach unto the ends of the earth.

It entered not into the thoughts of the writer, and far surpassed his hopes, when first led to look into the prophecies concerning Edom, from the statement of an Arab report recorded by Volney, that in so short a time the fulfilment of these prophecies might be set before the eyes of men, even without their having to "come and see." And after having adduced new evidence in successive editions from striking facts, clearly illustrative of the predictions relative to Edom, and to its once terrible metropolis, an appeal may now be made to the sight as well as to the understanding of men. For just

as these pages are passing through the press,[1] the author has timely received from Paris (and would that that city would give heed to the truth, which it thus farther affords the means of confirming) the first six livraisons of a work entitled, *Voyage de l'Arabie Pétrée par Mess. Leon de Laborde et Linant*, now in the course of publication, which contains, in the numbers first published, seventeen splendid engravings of the ruins of Petra alone, in which, by merely affixing a text, the beauties of art become immediately subservient to the interests of religion. To these, others are now added, and the splendid work has been completed. Where, very recently, it was difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain a single fact, and where only indirect evidence could be obtained, men may now, as it were, look upon Idumea, and see how the lines of confusion and the stones of emptiness have been stretched over it. And we may now, in like manner, look upon the ruins of the chief city of Edom, of which the very existence was till lately altogether unknown. All the plates attest its vast magnificence, and the almost incredible and inconceivable labour, continued as it must have been from age to age, prior to the days of Moses and later than the Christian era, by which so great a multiplicity of mausoleums were excavated from the rock. And Truth speaks out, not from the lips of a lying spirit evoked by the fancy of a skeptical philosopher, but from the face of the live rock, which exhibits the excavations in the clefts, singularly characteristic of the scene, and declares by the order of architecture, as if still told by every stroke of the chisel, that the citizens of Petra did *build* after the era of the prophets; while the fragments of ruins, of Grecian and Roman architecture, as well as of more ancient date, which are strewed over the ground, and cover the valley which was the site of the city, and which is surrounded by precipitous hills and excavated rocks, show that those buildings, whose doom was pronounced before their

[1] Sixth edition.

CORINTHIAN COLUMNS IN PETRA.

erection, have, according to the same sure word, been *thrown down.*

The topographical view of the land of Idumea, taken from El Nakb, gives us to see that Edom is *most desolate, the desolation of desolations;* that the country which was given unto Esau, as the *fatness of the earth*, and in which many cities were built, has been *made bare, and that the lines of confusion and the stones of emptiness have been stretched over it.* In the brief explanatory note which accompanies the plate, it is stated, that "no map, however well executed, can represent the aspect of a country so well as views taken from *an elevated point, and comprehending a great extent.* It is from such *demi-panoramas* alone that a correct idea can be formed. Such has been the object proposed in drawing these two views." (The other view, of a similar character, represents the southern coast of Edom, on the borders of the Red Sea. The accompanying view has been selected, as comprehending the greatest extent, and showing the aspect of the country.)

"The view is taken from El Nakb, a precipitous ascent, six miles south of Mount Hor, and consequently of Petra. It comprehends to the left, or the west, *Wady* Arabia, (or the valley of Arabia,) a long and straight plain of sand, which, commencing at the Red Sea, extends to the north, in a direct line to the Jordan, and was, without doubt, the ancient bed of that river before the volcanic eruption which formed the actual basis of the Dead Sea, and of which the Bible has given so faithful a recital. On the right bank, towards the west, lies the adjoining *Wady Gebb*, through which the Fellahs of Petra repair to Gaza. Towards the east, (on the right of the view,) there is seen, in the middle of a small plain, an insulated rock called *El Aase*, on which is a tomb of the same form of construction as those of Petra. Farther to the right is a high rock, which forms, as it were, the first rampart in the environs of Petra, elevated in the form of a cone, with a tree on the summit. Following the same direction, we meet with Mount Hor,

the highest rock in the country, on the summit of which is seen the *Tomb of Aaron*, held in great veneration in that region. To the east of that mountain, in a small plain of unequal surface, enclosed in the midst of rocks, of which the masses seem to be accumulated and pressed together, is built the city of Petra, the capital of the Nabatheans. The picture is terminated by the grand chain of mountains which separates Arabia Deserta from Arabia Petræa, properly so called."

The explicit testimony of Laborde here enhances the worth of his valuable engravings. It is, he states, "from the summit of El Nakb that one can judge of the general aspect of the country, of the melancholy and dismal character of which it is difficult to convey an idea with the pencil alone." But the prophetic description surpasses that of the pen or pencil of man, however gifted the painter, or however graphic the delineation. For he immediately adds, "Many prophets have announced the misery of Idumea, but the strong language of Ezekiel can alone come up to the height (or reach the acme) of this great desolation."[1] *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and when the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate. I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. And I will fill his mountains with his slain men, and in thy hills and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*[2]

[1] On peut juger ainsi de leur élévation et de l'aspect général du pays, dont le triste et lugubre charactère est difficile à transporter avec l'aide seule du crayon. Plusieurs prophètes avaient annoncé le malheur de l'Idumée; mais la forte parole d'Ezéchiel peut seule s'élever à la hauteur de cette grande desolation.—*Voyage*, p. 61.

[2] Ezek. xxxv.

One engraving is peculiarly striking, as indirectly exemplifying the *unique* character of the scenery, by which, at a glance, Petra is identified, and distinguished from any other city that ever existed. The design of the picture is to represent an isolated column. But the back-ground exhibits to view "a part of the valley of Moses," (Wady Mousa,) with the high rocks in the more distant perspective "pierced with thousands of excavations," (percés de milliers excavations.) The reader will be aware that the minute appearance of the excavations is occasioned by the distance of the view, and consequent diminution of the apparent height of the rocks; and in the multiplicity of excavations, perceptible even in the rocks which border the elongated valley, he will not fail to observe those in the clefts of the rocks, and to see how the inhabitants of the capital of Edom made their *nest as high as the eagle's.* This perfect coincidence both with the description, as identifying the spot, and with the prediction of the prophet, as now abandoned and desolate, is the more remarkable, as it is incidentally and indirectly placed in view, the title of the print being, A View of an Isolated Column (Vue d'une Colonne isolée.)

In the notes connected with the *ruins of a temple*, of which two views are given, it is stated that "besides the gigantic and singular tombs cut out of the rock, Petra contains a great number of monuments, of which the ruins attest the beautiful style and the magnificence; *but of all these buildings*, the only one which has resisted the ravages of time is that which is here represented. Situated to the west of the city, on the bank of the river, it towers over the innumerable wreck of buildings (débris) which covers the soil, and yet presents, though in ruins, a beautiful mass, and beautiful details of architecture. The cornice which surmounts the temple is in a pure and elegant style. In the back-ground is seen the antique pavement, as it still exists."

In explanation of the plate which represents the ruins of a triumphal arch, it is stated, "The passage under

the triumphal arch leads to a public place, a species of forum, paved with large flag-stones, which reach to the temple that is seen in the back-ground. The monument represented in this view formed three arcades, of which one, that in the middle, is by far the largest, and served for carriages, and the two others for foot-passengers. There is observable in the construction some analogy to the triumphal arch which terminates the colonnade of Palmyra, towards the east. The pilaster, which still remains, is that which separates the middle arch from that of one of the corners." "This view is taken from the west, and represents the same monument described (as above) in the preceding livraison. In the back-ground is seen one part of the grand funereal monuments."

Other plates present to view the vast magnificence of the tombs of Petra. There is one tomb, of which a view is given, which is peculiarly deserving of notice, there being engraven on it a Latin inscription, with a name of a magistrate, Quintus Prætextus Florentinus, who died in that city, being governor of that part of Arabia Petræa. "It behoved to be," it is said, "about the time of Adrian or Antoninus Pius," or at a period unquestionably several centuries posterior to the latest of the predictions.

Elaborate descriptions of splendid scenes by the pen of travellers are, as Laborde remarks, sometimes charged with being exaggerated. But the views which he gives of the Khasne of Petra show that the verbal description might be highly wrought, and yet come short of the truth; even as he and others remark that the pencil itself can convey only an inadequate representation of 'the magnificent edifice,' which, to this day, is only slightly defaced.

"*I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return, and ye* SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD."[1] "EVERY ONE THAT GOETH BY IT SHALL BE ASTONISHED."[2] "I would," says a recent traveller, "that the skeptic could stand as I did, among the ruins

[1] Ezek. xxxv. 9. [2] Jer. xlix. 17.

FRONT VIEW OF THE KHASNÉ.

of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of one risen from the dead:—though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the handwriting of God himself, in the desolation and eternal ruin around him."[1]

"Days and weeks," says Lord Lindsay, "might be spent here (at PETRA) if every excavation were visited. We left the valley after revisiting the Khasne, and exploring several of the excavated dwellings, for it is clear, I think, both from the language of Scripture and the appearance of the caves themselves, that the majority, if not all of them, were the abodes of the living, not of the dead. Such is Petra, the Sela of Scripture, the Hagar of the Arabs, each word signifying the same. 'Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of THE ROCK, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou make thy nest as high as the eagle,—though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.'"[2]

. . . "We passed many ruins and excavations, both on this and on the other side of Petra."[3]

"On leaving Eel Webe, we entered the low barren ridges that skirt Wady Araba on the west, and, for several hours during this and the following day, traversed a country of the most utter desolation, hills succeeding hills, without the slightest picturesque beauty, covered with loose flints and gravel; sterility in its most repulsive garb; it made the very heart ache, and the spirits sink. And such is Edom, 'most desolate,' as prophecy foretold it should be," &c.[4] "We encamped in Wady

[1] Incidents of Travels in Arabia Petræa, &c., by an American. Vol. ii. p. 76. New York, 1837.
[2] Vol. ii. pp. 38, 39. [3] Ibid. p. 41. [4] Ibid. p. 46.

Kournou, near the extensive ruins of an ancient walled town, bearing the same name. We saw fragments of pillars lying about, but no inscriptions; the town is, indeed, a mere heap of stones."[1] "I have no doubt that this is the Elusa of the Romans, the first Roman town on the great road from Jerusalem to Aila."[2]

Lord Claud Hamilton, who, together with Lord Rokeby and Mr. Littleton, visited Petra in 1839, is a still more recent eye-witness of the predicted desolation which has come on Edom and its capital. After quoting some of these prophecies, he adds, "Nothing can exceed the desolation of its present condition, although the signs of its former wealth and power are so durable as to have remained many centuries after it was deserted, and they look as if as many more may pass over them without working any visible change. The commencement of the prophecy has been most wonderfully fulfilled; for although it was beyond the foresight of man to imagine that so wealthy and powerful a city should be deserted and desolate, yet all human works and habitations are subject to a like fate; but the words, 'I will make thee small among the heathen,' have been actually accomplished to such a degree that the very site of Petra has for centuries been unknown. That a great city should be thus swept from the memory of man, and blotted out, for a long season, from the knowledge of the world, is a most striking manifestation of the truth of the prophetic record, and utterly exceeded all human foresight and sagacity. But every step in this country exhibits some wonderful fulfilment of the doom which was pronounced while it was flowing with riches and teeming with inhabitants; every specific misfortune has overtaken this devoted kingdom, and yet there are innumerable remains of what it once was."

A few extracts from Lord Claud Hamilton's graphic description of Petra will be interesting to the reader:—

[1] Travels of Lord Lindsay, vol. ii. pp. 47, 48.
[2] Ibid. p. 48.

"Following a path which wound amongst undulating hills and rocks, we gradually found ourselves surrounded by the peculiar remains of this singular locality. On both sides were curiously shaped tombs, either excavated from the living rock, with fanciful exteriors, or boldly cut out from it, and standing apart in square masses with ornamented façades, and surmounted with battlements, steps, small pyramidal forms, and other devices, equally hewn out from the mountain. Many of these excavations may have been intended for the living, as they contain several apartments. On the left the abrupt cliffs rise to a great height, and, towering over the undulated site of the ancient capital, exhibit on their pierced sides numerous marks of the industry and peculiar taste of the inhabitants of Selah. In front is an extensive space, partially covered with grass, shrubs, and ruins, and intersected with ravines, in which it is evident that streams formerly flowed; beyond, some lower hills form the eastern horizon, whilst to the right another lofty range of precipitous hills hem in the valley, and present a continued line of splendid façades, and noble excavated temples and palaces, which at once strike the beholder as the most extraordinary sight that the imagination can conceive. Nothing can exceed the singularity of the general aspect, nor do the excavations lose any of their marvels on a nearer approach. Having passed the single column of which Laborde speaks, and also the square palace and triumphal arch, the full and distinct view of the wondrous line of magnificent excavations burst on my sight. It is impossible by any description to convey an idea of the general aspect of this most extraordinary place, where art and nature seem to have striven for the mastery, and each has contributed to render it alike the most wonderful and instructive sight that can possibly be surveyed by man. The high cliffs of the northern boundary present to view an endless variety of excavations, dwellings, tombs, and temples."

The theatre of Petra, like that of Ammon, is not the least remarkable memorial of its populousness and

wealth, constructed, as it was, for the simultaneous and transient assemblage of the gayest of its citizens, and not, though both be equally empty now, like the tombs, for the permanent abode of the successive generations of its nobles. As measured by the same intelligent and observant traveller, "it consists of thirty-eight rows of high steps or stone benches, of which the uppermost is 152 paces in length." And how different now is a night-scene there from what it was, when the capital of Edom, deceived by its terribleness, and fearless of danger, was given to its pleasures, and the shout of a multitude was heard in triumph over Israel. With other feelings the solitary sojourner of a day, as may be farther related in facts, not painted in fancy, contemplates the scene of desolated grandeur over which the word of the Lord is triumphant.

"It was the season of full moon. I went out to enjoy the fine effect produced by the shades amongst these high cliffs, and to contemplate this scene of departed grandeur in the stillness of night, which so well accorded with its desolate appearance. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the evening. The clear sky spangled with innumerable bright stars, whilst the light which rules the night cast its fine pale beams on the many temples, palaces, dwellings, and tombs that every cliff and rock presented; their numbers, inexplicable situations, and apparent want of arrangement and system, rendered the scene indescribably interesting. I chose the theatre as one point of observation. There, alone, surrounded by tenantless cliffs, I tried to conjure up some of the many scenes which had been enacted there, when the rocks resounded with the applauses of assembled thousands, and this deserted spot was crowded with the noble, the great, and the wealthy, brilliant with light, and gorgeous from the dresses of the spectators—the power and glory of Edom seemed as a dream which could not be credited. Turning homewards again, the view of the open ground, the arch, the square palace, and the cliff beyond, was peculiarly striking.

"The springs have been dried up to such an extent as to render the renewal of the general fertility of Edom impossible. In the vicinity of the theatre of Petra, and in other places along the course of the stream, reeds and shrubs grow luxuriantly, oleanders and wild figs abound, and give proof that a little cultivation would again cover the rock, and fill the cliffs with the numberless gardens which once adorned them. The traces of former fertility are innumerable; and it is likewise evident, that every spot capable of sustaining vegetable life was carefully watered and cultivated. There are numerous grooves in the rocks to convey the rain-water to tombs, or to the little clefts in which even now figs are found. Every spot capable of being so protected has been walled up, however small the space gained, and however difficult the means of securing it. The ancient inhabitants seem to have left no accessible place untouched. They have exhibited equal art and industry in eliciting from the grand walls of their marvellous capital whatever the combination of climate, irrigation, and botanical skill could foster in the scanty soil that was afforded them. The hanging gardens must have produced an enchanting effect amongst the noble buildings of the town when it was in all its glory."[1]

Edom has been rendered *most desolate;* and its general desolation is seen to be irreclaimable. Patches covered with wild flowers, growing in rich luxuriance, and some cultivated spots in the bottom of the valleys, may serve as a token of what Idumea was. But although destined to be the scene of judgments which yet await it, a *remnant* is all that is left of Edom. And it is written, "In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the *remnant of Edom*," &c.—But judgments on Mount Seir have yet to prepare the way of the conversion of Israel,—"I will make myself known among them when I have

[1] Lord Claud Hamilton's Journal.

judged thee."—"When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate."[1]

They shall be called the border of wickedness. Strabo contrasts the quiet disposition of the citizens of Petra with the contentious spirit of the foreigners who resided there; and the uninterrupted tranquillity which the townsmen mutually maintained together, excited the admiration of Athenodorus.[2] The fine gold is changed: no such people are there now to be found. Though Burckhardt travelled as an Arab, associated with them, submitted to all their privations, and was so completely master of their language and of their manners as to escape detection, he was yet reduced to that state within the boundaries of Edom, which alone can secure tranquillity to the traveller in the desert; "he had nothing with him that could attract the notice, or excite the cupidity of the Bedouins," and was even stripped of some rags that covered his wounded ankles.[3] The Arabs in that quarter, he observes, "have the reputation of being very daring thieves." In like manner a Motselim who had been twenty years in office, pledged himself to Captains Irby and Mangles, and the travellers who accompanied them, (in presence of the governor of Jerusalem,) that the Arabs of Wady Mousa are "a most savage and treacherous race," and added, that they would make use of their Frank's blood for a medicine. That this character of wickedness and cruelty was not misapplied, they had too ample proof, not only in the dangers with which they were threatened, but by the fact which they learned on the spot, that upwards of thirty pilgrims from Barbary had been murdered at Petra the preceding year, by the men of Wady Mousa.[4] Even the Arabs of the surrounding deserts, as already stated, dread to approach it; and towards the borders of Edom on the south, "the Arabs about Akaba," as described by Pococke, and as expe-

[1] Amos ix. 11, 12; Ezek. xxxv. 11, 14.
[2] Strabo, p. 779. [3] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 438.
[4] Irby and Mangles's Travels, p. 417; Macmichael's Journey, pp. 202, 234.

rienced by Burckhardt, "are a very bad people, and notorious robbers, and are at war with all others."[1] Such evidence, all undesignedly given, clearly shows that in truth Edom is CALLED *the border of wickedness.*

Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof. In lieu of any direct and explicit statement in corroboration of the literal fulfilment of this prediction, it may be worthy of observation, that the camels of the Bedouins feed upon the thorny branches of the Talh (gum arabic) tree, of which they are extremely fond; that the large thorns of these trees are a great annoyance to them, and to their cattle: and that they are so abundant in different parts of Idumea, that each Bedouin carries in his girdle a pair of small pincers to extract the thorns from his feet.[2] Direct evidence may now be adduced (13th edit.) from the last published livraisons of M. Laborde. In describing the existing state of Petra, he states, that the thorns rise to the same height with the columns; creeping and prickly plants hide the remains of the works of man; the thorn, or bramble, reaches the top of the monuments, grows on their cornices, and conceals the base of the columns.

But the precise fact has still more recently (23d edit.) been ascertained or confirmed, after a special examination on the spot, and with a direct reference to the prediction.

"A square palace, near to the triumphal arch, is the only edifice of masonry standing. I entered it," writes Lord Claud Hamilton, "and examined the interior. The wooden joists still remain in the walls, apparently strong and sound. The usual arrangement of chambers exists, but only the lofty walls and partitions remain. The ground is strewed with fragments of the roof, hewn stone, and portions of the cornice, amongst which numbers of *thistles, prickly plants, and nettles grow.* At first, I was not certain about the nettles; but wishing to ascertain their identity, I put my hand to them, and thought they had not the force of English nettles, yet they gave

[1] Pococke's Description of the East, vol. i. p. 136.
[2] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 446.

a pungent feeling, which, if the plant were stronger, would amount to a sting. They had exactly the leaf; but it was late in the season, so that want of moisture had probably weakened them." Thus there were *nettles* in the only palace that the proud city of Petra contains erect. *Thorns come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof.*

I will make thee small among the nations, thou art greatly despised. Though the border of wickedness, and the retreat of a horde of thieves, who are distinguished as peculiarly savage even among the wild Arabs, and thus an object of dread as well as of astonishment to those who pass thereby, yet, contrasted with what it was, or reckoned among the nations, Edom is small indeed. Within almost all its boundary, it may be said that none *abide*, or have any fixed or permanent residence; and instead of the superb structures, the works of various ages, which long adorned its cities, the huts of the Arabs, where even huts they have, are mere mud hovels of "mean and ragged appearance," which, in general, are deserted on the least alarm. But miserable habitations as these are, they scarcely seem to exist anywhere throughout Edom, but on a single point on its borders; and wherever the Arabs otherwise wander in search of spots for pasturage for their cattle, (found in hollows, or near to springs after the winter rains,) tents are their only covering. Those which pertain to the more powerful tribes, are sometimes both numerous and large; yet, though they form at best but a frail dwelling, many of them are "very low and small." Near to the ruins of Petra, Burckhardt passed an encampment of Bedouin tents, most of which were "the smallest he had ever seen, about four feet high, and ten in length;" and towards the southwest border of Edom, he met with a few wanderers who had no tents with them, and whose only shelter from the burning rays of the sun, and the *heavy dews of night*, was the scanty branches of the Talh trees. The subsistence of the Bedouins is often as precarious as their habitations are mean; the flocks they tend, or

which they pillage from more fertile regions, are their only possessions; and in that land where commerce long concentrated its wealth, and through which the treasures of Ophir passed, the picking of gum arabic from thorny branches is now the poor occupation, the semblance of industry practised by the wild and wandering tenants of a desert. Edom is *small among the nations;* and how *greatly is it despised*, when the public authorities at Constantinople deny any knowledge of it, or of the ruins of its capital; when the city of Petra is thus forgotten and unknown among the representatives of the villagers of Byzantium!

Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord, Is wisdom no more in Teman? is understanding perished from the prudent? Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? Fallen and despised as it now is, Edom—did not the prescription of many ages abrogate its right—might lay claim to the title of having been the first seat of learning, as well as the centre of commerce. While splendid remains of ancient art give undoubted proof that wisdom and understanding subsisted in the mount of Esau after the age of the prophets, the first of modern philosophers thus speaks of the wisdom of the Edomites in the earliest ages. "The Egyptians *having learned the skill of the Edomites*, began now to observe the position of the stars, and the length of the solar year, for enabling them to know the position of the stars at any time, and to sail by them at all times without sight of the shore; and thus gave a beginning to astronomy and navigation."[1] "It seems that letters, and astronomy, and the trade of carpenters, were invented by the merchants of the Red Sea, and that they were propagated from Arabia Petræa into Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Asia Minor, and Europe."[2] While the philosopher may thus think of Edom with respect, neither the admirer of genius, the man of feeling, nor the child of devotion will, even to this day, seek

[1] Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms, p. 208
[2] Ibid. p. 212.

from any land a richer treasure of plaintive poetry, of impassioned eloquence, and of fervid piety, than Edom has bequeathed to the world in the book of Job. It exhibits to us, in language the most pathetic and sublime, all that a man could feel, in the outward pangs of his body, and the inner writhings of his mind, of the frailties of his frame, and of the dissolution of his earthly comforts and endearments: all that mortal can discern, by meditating on the ways, and contemplating the works of God, of the omniscience and omnipotence of the Most High, and of the inscrutable dispensations of his providence: all *that* knowledge which could first tell, in written word, of Arcturus, and Orion, and Pleiades; and all that devotedness of soul, and immortality of hope, which—with patience that faltered not even when the heart was bruised, and almost broken, and the body covered over with distress—could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

But if the question now be asked, *is* understanding perished out of Edom? the answer, like every response of the prophetic word, may be briefly given: it is. The minds of the Bedouins are as uncultivated as the deserts they traverse. Practical wisdom is, in general, the first that man learns, and the last that he retains. And the simple but significant fact already alluded to, that the clearing away of a little rubbish, merely "to allow the water to flow" into an ancient cistern, in order to render it useful to themselves, "is an undertaking far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs," shows that *understanding is* indeed *perished from among them.* They view the indestructible works of former ages not only with wonder, but with superstitious regard, and consider them as the work of genii. They look upon a European as a magician, and believe that, having seen any spot where they imagine that treasures are deposited, he can "afterwards command the guardian of the treasure to set the whole before him."[1] In Teman, which yet maintains a precarious existence, the inhabitants pos-

[1] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 429.

sess the desire without the means of knowledge. The Koran is their only study, and contains the sum of their wisdom; and although he was but a "miserable comforter," and was overmastered in argument by a kinsman stricken with affliction, yet no *Temanite* can now discourse with either the wisdom or the pathos of *Eliphaz* of old. *Wisdom is no more in Teman, and understanding has perished out of the mount of Esau.*

While there is thus subsisting evidence and proof that the ancient inhabitants of Edom were renowned for wisdom as well as for power, and while desolation has spread so widely over it, that it can scarcely be said to be inhabited by man; there still are tenants who hold possession of it, to whom it is abandoned by man, and to whom it was decreed by a voice more than mortal.

"But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it (Idumea;) the owl also, and the raven, shall dwell in it. It shall be an habitation for dragons and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr (the hairy or rough creature) shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein."[1]

Such is the precision of the prophecies, so remote are they from all ambiguity of meaning, and so distinct are the events which they detail, that it is almost unnecessary to remark that the different animals here enumerated were not all in the same manner, or in the same degree, to be possessors of Edom. Some of them were to rest,

[1] Isa. xxxiv. 11, 13—17.

to meet, to be gathered there; the owl and the raven were to dwell in it, and it was to be a habitation for dragons; while of the cormorant and bittern, it is emphatically said, that they were to possess it. And is it not somewhat beyond a mere fortuitous coincidence, imperfect as the information is respecting Edom, that, in "seeking out" proof concerning these animals, and whether none of them do fail, the most decisive evidence should, in the first instance, be unconsciously communicated from the boundaries of Edom, of the one which is first noted in the prediction, and which was to possess the land? It will at once be conceded, that in whatever country any particular animal is unknown, no proper translation of its name can there be given; and that for the purpose of designating or identifying it, reference must be had to the original name, and to the natural history of the country in which it is known. And, without any ambiguity or perplexity arising from the translation of the word, or any need of tracing it through any other languages to ascertain its import, the identical word of the original, with scarcely the slightest variation, (and that only the want of the final vowel in the Hebrew word, vowels in that language being often supplied in the enunciation or by points,) is, from the affinity of the Hebrew and Arabic, used on the very spot by the Arabs, to denote the very bird which may literally be said to possess the land. While in the last inhabited village of Moab, and close upon the borders of Edom, Burckhardt noted the animals which frequented the neighbouring territory, in which he distinctly specifies Shera, the land of the Edomites; and he relates that "the bird katta[1] is met with in immense numbers. They fly in such large flocks that the Arab boys often kill two or three of them at a time, merely by throwing a stick among them."[2] If any objector be here inclined to say, that it is not to be wondered at that any par-

[1] קאת kath, a species of partridge. It is sometimes written in the original, katha. Onkel, קתא, vide Simonis Lexicon, p. 1393.

[2] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 406.

ticular bird should be found in any given country, that it might continue to remain for a term of ages, and that such a surmise would not exceed the natural probabilities of the case; the fact may be freely admitted as applicable, perhaps, to most countries of the globe. But who ever, elsewhere, saw any wild bird in any country in flocks so immensely numerous that two or three of them could be killed by the single throw of a stick from the hand of a boy; and that this could be stated, not as a forcible and perhaps false illustration to denote their number, nor as a wonderful chance or unusual incident, but as a fact of frequent occurrence? Who ever, elsewhere, heard of such a fact, not as happening merely on a sea-rock, the resort of myriads of birds, or their temporary resting-place when exhausted in their flight, but in an extensive country, their permanent abode? Or if, among the manifold discoveries of travellers in modern times, it were really related that such occupants of a country are to be found, or that a corresponding fact exists in any other region of the earth which was once tenanted by man, who can also "find" in the records of a high antiquity the prediction that declared it? Of what country now inhabited could the same fact be now with certainty foretold? and where is the seer who can discern the vision, fix on the spot over the world's surface, and select, from the whole winged tribe, the name of the first in order, and the greatest in number, of the future and chief possessors of the land?

Of the bittern (kephud) as a joint possessor with the katta of Idumea, evidence has not been given or ascertained:—but numerous as the facts have been which modern discoveries have consigned over to the service of revelation, that word of truth which fears no investigation can appeal to other facts, unknown to history, and still undiscovered, but registered in prophecy, and there long since revealed.*

* Of the different animals, respecting which it is said, in the judgments denounced against Idumea, "No one of these shall fail," the first in order are the קאת *kath* and קפוד *kephud*, or, as read

The owl also, and the raven, (or crow,) shall dwell in it. The owl and raven do dwell in it. Captain Man-

with the points, kippod, translated in our version, the cormorant and the bittern. It has long been my opinion, as intimated in previous editions, that קפוד is the hedgehog or the porcupine, as stated by Bochart, who calls the one a species of the other. And as, from the similarity of the Hebrew and Arabic names, the *kath* may be identified with the *katta*, so also may the *kephud* with *kunfud*, the Arabic name of the hedgehog or porcupine. In Bochart's (Bocharti Opera, tom. iii. p. 1035—1038, cap. xxxvi.) learned investigation or treatise on the name, he states that the word *kunphud* includes both, as is clear from Avicenna, who mentions the porcupine as one of the species. In Damir, whom he also quotes, the female hedgehog is called the mother of the porcupine, and the porcupine is called the large hedgehog. The Septuagint and Vulgate translate the word ἐχῖνος and ericius the hedgehog. That the *kunphud* is the hedgehog, no one, says Bochart, will deny who will read Damir, where *kunphud* is named *abussuchi, the father of spines;* and *ankado, i. e.* a decorticator, or peeler; and *alasaiso,* because it wanders in the night; hence the proverb among the Arabs,—a greater night wanderer than the *kunphud*. That the kippod (or kephud) of the Hebrews, —the kuphad of the Chaldeans,—and the kunphud of the Arabs, says Bochart, are the same animal, will be acknowledged by every one who has any knowledge of this language. Lowth calls it the porcupine. Gesenius and Parkhurst translate the word, the hedgehog.

Being persuaded that such was the significancy of the word, on passing within two days' journey of Petra, accompanied by an Arab guide who had repeatedly visited it, I made special inquiry, wherever opportunity offered, in passing through the desert, and at Jerusalem and Hebron, whether hedgehogs or porcupines are to be found in Idumea. Different Arabs who were questioned concerning it, knew the *kunphud* well. The guide described it as an animal with four feet, and a small head, which creeps into holes among the ruins, and is covered with very strong hair. According to his account, they abound in Wady Mousa; but are not to be seen in the day-time, as they come forth only at night, and thus they may have been unnoticed by travellers. He said that some of them, carried from Wady Mousa, would likely be found in Hebron. On inquiry at that town, I was informed that the Arabs caught them among the ruins of Wady Mousa, by putting cloaks over their holes during night, and catching them on their return; and that the reason why they caught and carried them to Hebron was, that their blood was accounted a cure for sore eyes. There being none of them at that time in Hebron, M. Elias, a Greek Christian, offered to send to Petra for some of them, and to forward them for me to Jerusalem. But the evidence of their

gles relates, that while he and his fellow-travellers were examining the ruins and contemplating the sublime scenery of Petra, "the screaming of the eagles, hawks, and owls, who were soaring above their heads in considerable numbers, seemingly annoyed at any one approaching their lonely habitation, added much to the singularity of the scene." "The fields of Tafyle," situated in the immediate vicinity of Edom, are, according to the observations of Burckhardt, "frequented by an immense number of crows."[1] "I expected," says Seetzen, (alluding to his purposed tour through Idumea, and to the information he had received from the Arabs,) "to make several discoveries in mineralogy, as well as in the animals and vegetables of the country, on the manna of the desert, the ravens,"[2] &c.

It shall be a habitation for dragons (serpents.) I laid his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. The evidence, though derived from testimony, and not from personal observation, of two travellers of so contrary characters and views as Shaw and Volney, is so accordant and apposite, that it may well be sustained in lieu of more direct proof. The former represents the land of Edom, and the wilderness of which it now forms part, as abounding with a variety of lizards and vipers which are very dangerous and troublesome.[3] And the narrative given by Volney, already quoted, is equally decisive as to the fact. The Arabs, in general, avoid the ruins of the cities of Idumea, "on account

being actually taken in Edom would have rested merely on the testimony of the Arab bearer, and would scarcely have been satisfactory. An English traveller stated that he saw a dead porcupine in a valley near to Petra. Though not amounting to a full elucidation, as required in the text, these circumstances, to which others might be added, are worthy of notice, as they may lead to farther inquiry, and complete the proof, that the *kephud*, like the katta, with its almost unchanged name, *possesses Edom*, and has its habitation in the midst of the ruins of Petra, and *that no one of these do fail.*

[1] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 405.

[2] Seetzen's Travels, p. 46.

[3] Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 105, 338.

of *the enormous scorpions with which they swarm.*" Its cities thus deserted by man, and abandoned to their undisturbed and hereditary possession, Edom may be justly called *the inheritance of dragons.*

The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, (or the borders of the sea.) Instead of these words of the English version, Parkhurst renders the former the *ravenous birds inhabiting the wilderness.* The interpretation was given long before the fact to which it refers was made known. But it has now been ascertained (and without any allusion, on the other hand, to the prediction) that eagles,[1] hawks, and ravens, all ravenous birds, are common in Edom, and *do not fail* to illustrate the prediction as thus translated. But when animals from different regions are said to meet, the prophecy thus implying that some of them at least did not properly pertain to the country, would seem to require some further verification. And of all the wonderful circumstances attached to the history, or pertaining to the fate of Edom, there is one which is not to be ranked among the least in singularity, that bears no remote application to the prefixed prophecy, and that ought not, perhaps, to pass here unnoted. It is recorded in an ancient chronicle, that the emperor Decius caused fierce lions and lionesses to be transported from [the deserts of] Africa to the borders of Palestine and Arabia, in order that, propagating there, they might act as an annoyance and a barrier to the barbarous Saracens.[2] Between Arabia and Palestine lies the doomed and execrated land of Edom. And may it not thus be added, that a cause so unnatural and unforeseen would greatly tend to the destruction of the flocks, and to the desolation of all the adjoining territory, and seem to be as if the king of the forest was to take possession of it for his subjects? And may it not be even literally said, that *the wild beasts of*

[1] Burckhardt's Travels, p. 405.

[2] Ὁ αυτος Δεκιος βασιλευς ηγαγεν απο της Αφρικης λεοντας φοβερους και λεαινας, και απελυσεν εις το λιμιτον ανατολης απο Αραβιας και Παλαιστινης ιας του Κιρκισιου Καστρου, προς το ποιησαι γενεαν δια τους βαρβαρους Σαρακηνους. (Chronicon Alexandrinum, ad an. C. 358. Relandi Palæstina, p. 97.)

the desert meet there with the wild beasts of the borders of the sea?

The satyr shall dwell there. The satyr is entirely a fabulous animal. The word (soir) literally means *a rough hairy one:* and, like a synonymous word in both the Greek and Latin languages which has the same signification, has been translated both by lexicographers and commentators, *the goat.*[1] Parkhurst says, that, in this sense, he would understand this very passage: and Lowth distinctly asserts, without assigning to it any other meaning, that "the word originally signifies *goat.*"[2] Such respectable and well-known authorities have been cited, because their decision must have rested on criticism alone, as it was impossible that their minds could have been biassed by any knowledge of the fact in reference to Edom. It was their province, and that of others, to illustrate its meaning: it was Burckhardt's, however unconsciously, to bear, from ocular observation, witness to its truth. "In all the Wadys south of the Modjel and El Asha, (pointing to Edom,) "large herds of mountain-goats are met with. They pasture in flocks of forty and fifty together."[3] *They dwell there.*

It shall be a court for owls. The screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate. While, as already quoted, the screaming of the eagles, hawks, and owls, which in considerable numbers soared above their heads, was heard in the day-time by one party of travellers, others (M. Laborde, &c.) who more lately followed

[1] "So the Greek τραγος, a he-goat, is from τραχυς, rough, on account of the *roughness* of his hair, and the Latin hircus, a he-goat, for hirtus, rough." (Parkhurst's Lexicon.)

[2] Lowth assigns the reason why the word is translated *satyr;* it is supposed that evil spirits of old time appeared in the shape of goats, as the learned Bochart has proved. (Isa. xiii. 21.)

[3] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria.

them and remained longer on the spot, relate in a like incidental manner, that at night the screech-owl was heard above the rest. There she rests, and finds for herself a place of rest. And as each or any of these is known to man, and can be distinguished even at night, or when unseen, by its peculiar scream; so, now that the cry of a wild beast, or the sound of a reptile, or the screaming of a bird of prey, are the only forms or signs of recognition among the tenants of the capital of Edom, it is thus that *they are gathered together, every one with her mate.*

But the evidence respecting all the animals specified in the prophecy, as the future possessors of Edom, is not yet complete, and is difficult to be ascertained. And, in words that seem to indicate this very difficulty, it is still reserved for future travellers to disclose the facts; and for future inquirers, whether Christian or infidel, to seek out of the book of the Lord and read; and to "find that no one of these do fail." Yet, recent as the disclosure of any information respecting them has been, and offered, as it now for the first time is, for the consideration of every candid mind, the positive terms and singleness of object of the prophecies themselves, and the undesigned and decisive evidence, are surely enough to show how greatly these several specific predictions and their respective facts exceed all possibility of their being the word or the work of man, and how clearly there may be discovered in them all, if sight itself be conviction, the credential of inspiration, and the operation of His hands, to whose prescience futurity is open; to whose power all nature is subservient; and "whose mouth it hath commanded, and whose spirit it hath gathered them."

Noted as Edom was for its terribleness, and possessed of a capital city, from which even a feeble people could not easily have been dislodged, there scarcely could have been a question, even among its enemies, to what *people* that country would eventually belong. And it never could have been thought of by any native of another

land, as the Jewish prophets were, nor by any uninspired mortal whatever, that a kingdom, which had previously subsisted so long, (and in which princes ceased not to reign, commence to flourish, and "a people of great opulence" to dwell for more than six hundred years thereafter,) would be finally extinct, that all its cities would be for ever desolate, and, though it could have boasted, more than any other land, of indestructible habitations for men, that their *habitations* would be *desolate;* and that certain *wild animals*, mentioned by name, would, in different manners and degrees, possess the country from generation to generation.

There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. Edom shall be cut off for ever. The aliens of Judah ever look with wistful eyes to the land of their fathers; but no Edomite is now to be found to dispute the right of any animal to the possession of it, or to banish the owls from the temples and tombs of Edom. But the house of Esau did remain, and existed in great power, till after the commencement of the Christian era, a period far too remote from the date of the prediction for their subsequent history to have been foreseen by man. The Idumeans were soon after mingled with the Nabatheans. And in the third century, their language was disused, and their very name, as designating any people, had utterly perished; and their country itself having become an outcast from Syria, among whose kingdoms it had long been numbered, was united to Arabia Petræa.[1] Though the descendants of the twin-born Esau and Jacob have met a diametrically opposite fate, the fact is no less marvellous and undisputed, than the prediction in each case is alike obvious and true. While the posterity of Jacob have been "dispersed in every country under heaven," and are "scattered among all nations," and have ever remained distinct from them all, and while it is also declared that "a full end will never be made of them;" the Edomites, though they existed as a nation for more than seventeen hundred years, *have*, as a

[1] Origen, lib. iii. in Job.

period of nearly equal duration has proved, *been cut off for ever;* and while Jews are in every land, *there is not any remaining*, on any spot of earth, *of the house of Esau.*

Idumea, in aid of a neighbouring state, did send forth, on a sudden, an army of twenty thousand armed men; it contained many towns and villages long after the Christian era; successive kings and princes reigned in Petra; and magnificent tombs and temples, whose empty chambers and naked walls of wonderful architecture still strike the traveller with amazement, were constructed there, at a period unquestionably far remote from the time when it was given to the prophets of Israel to tell, that the house of Esau was to be cut off for ever, that there would be no kingdom there, and that wild animals would possess Edom for a heritage. And so despised is Edom, and the memory of its greatness lost, that there is no record of antiquity that can so clearly show us what once it was, in the days of its power, as we can now read in the page of prophecy, its existing desolation. But in that place where kings kept their court, and where nobles assembled, where manifest proofs of ancient opulence are concentrated, where princely mausoleums, retaining their external grandeur, but bereft of all their splendour, still look as if "fresh from the chisel,"—even there no man dwells; it is given by lot to birds, and beasts, and reptiles; it is a "court for owls," and scarcely are they ever frayed from their "lonely habitation," by the tread of a solitary traveller from a far distant land, among deserted dwellings and desolated ruins.

Hidden as the history and state of Edom have been for ages, every recent disclosure, being an echo of the prophecies, amply corroborates the truth, that the word of the Lord does not return unto him void, but ever fulfils the purpose for which he hath sent it. But the whole of its work is not yet wrought in Edom, which has farther testimony in store; and while the evidence is not yet complete, so neither is the time of the final

judgments on the land yet fully come. Judea, Ammon, and Moab, according to the word of prophecy, shall revive from their desolation, and the wild animals who have conjoined their depredations with those of barbarous men, in perpetuating the desolation of these countries, shall find a refuge and undisturbed possession in Edom, when the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion being past, it shall be divided unto them by line, when they shall possess it for ever, and from generation to generation shall dwell therein. But without looking into futurity, a retrospect may here warrant, before leaving the subject, a concluding clause.

That man is a bold *believer*, and must, with whatever reluctance, forego the name of *skeptic*, who possesses such redundant credulity as to think, that all the predictions respecting Edom, and all others recorded in Scripture, and realized by facts, were the mere hap-hazard results of fortuitous conjectures. And he who thus, without reflecting how incongruous it is to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," can deliberately, and with an unruffled mind, place such an opinion among the articles of his faith, may indeed be pitied by those who know in whom they have believed, but, if he forfeit not thereby all right of ever appealing to reason, must at least renounce all title to stigmatize, in others, even the most preposterous belief. Or if such, after all, must needs be his philosophical creed, and his rational conviction! what can hinder him from believing also that other chance words—such as truly marked the fate of Edom, but more numerous and clear, and which, were he to "seek out and read," he would find in the self-same "book of the Lord,"—may also prove equally true to the spirit, if not to the letter, against all the enemies of the gospel, whether hypocrites or unbelievers? May not his belief in the latter instance be strengthened by the experience that many averments of Scripture, in respect to times then future, and to facts then unknown, have already proved true? And may he not here find some analogy, at least, on which to rest his faith, whereas

the conviction which in the former case he so readily cherishes, is totally destitute of any semblance whatever to warrant the possibility of its truth? Or is this indeed the sum of his boasted wisdom, to hold to the conviction of the fallacy of all the coming judgments denounced in Scripture, till "experience," personal though it be, should prove them to be as true as the past, and a compulsory and unchangeable but unredeeming faith be grafted on despair? Or if less proof can possibly suffice, let him timely read and examine, and disprove also, all the credentials of revelation, before he account the believer credulous, or the unbeliever wise; or else let him abandon the thought that the unrepented iniquity and wilful perversity of man, and an evil heart of unbelief (all proof derided, all offered mercy rejected, all meetness for an inheritance among them that are sanctified unattained, and all warning lost) shall not finally forbid that Edom stand alone, the seared and blasted monument of the judgments of Heaven.

A word may here be spoken even to the wise. Were any of the sons of men to be uninstructed in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and in the knowledge of his word, which maketh wise unto salvation, and to be thus ignorant of the truths and precepts of the gospel, which should all tell upon every deed done in the body; what, in such a case, if all their superior knowledge were unaccompanied by religious principles, would all mechanical and physical science eventually prove, but the same, in kind, as the wisdom of the wise men of Edom? And were they to perfect in astronomy, navigation, and mechanics, what, according to Sir Isaac Newton, the Edomites began, what would the moulding of matter to their will avail them, as moral and accountable beings, if their own hearts were not conformed to the divine will; and what would all their labour be at last, but strength spent for naught? For were they to raise column above column, and again to hew a city out of the cliffs of the rock, let but such another word of that God, whom they seek not to know, go forth

against it, and all their mechanical ingenuity and labour would just end in forming—that which Petra is, and which Rome itself is destined to be—"a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." The experiment has already been made; it may well and wisely be trusted to as much as those which mortals make; and it is set before us that, instead of provoking the Lord to far worse than its repetition in personal judgments against ourselves, we may be warned by the spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, to hear and obey the words of Him—"even of Jesus, who delivereth from the wrath to come." For how much greater than any degradation to which hewn but unfeeling rocks can be reduced, is that of a soul, which while in the body might have been formed anew after the image of an all-holy God, and made meet for beholding his face in glory,—passing from spiritual darkness into a spiritual state where all knowledge of earthly things shall cease to be power; where all the riches of this world shall cease to be gain; where the want of religious principles and of Christian virtues shall leave the soul naked, as the bare and empty dwellings in the clefts of the rocks; where the thoughts of worldly wisdom, to which it was inured before, shall haunt it still, and be more unworthy and hateful occupants of the immortal spirit, than are the owls amid the palaces of Edom; and where all those sinful passions, which rested on the things which were seen, shall be like unto the scorpions which hold Edom as their heritage for ever, and which none can now scare away from among the wild vines that are there entwined around the broken altars, where false gods were worshipped.

PHILISTIA.

The land of the Philistines bordered on the west and south-west of Judea, and lies on the south-east point of the Mediterranean Sea. The country to the north of Gaza is very fertile, and long after the Christian era it possessed a very numerous population, and strongly fortified cities. No human probability could possibly have existed, in the time of the prophets, or at a much more recent date, of its eventual desolation. But it has belied, for many ages, every promise which the fertility of its soil, and the excellence both of its climate and situation gave, for many preceding centuries, of its permanency as a rich and well-cultivated region. And the voice of prophecy, which was not silent respecting it, proclaimed the fate that awaited it, in terms as contradictory, at the time, to every natural suggestion, as they are descriptive of what Philistia now actually is.

"I will stretch out my hand upon the Philistines, and destroy the remnant of the sea-coasts."[1] "Baldness is come upon Gaza; Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley."[2] "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof. I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces thereof. And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon; and I will turn my hand against Ekron; and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God."[3] "For Ashkelon shall be a desolation, and Ekron shall be rooted up. O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant; and the sea-coasts shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for

[1] Ezek. xxv. 16 [2] Jer. xlvii. 5.
[3] Amos i. 6, 7, 8.

flocks."[1] "The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited."[2]

The land of the Philistines was to be destroyed. It partakes of the general desolation common to it with Judea and other neighbouring states. While ruins are to be found in all Syria, they are particularly abundant along the sea-coasts, which formed, on the south, the realm of the Philistines. But its aspect presents some existing peculiarities, which travellers fail not to particularize, and which, in reference both to the state of the country and the fate of its different cities, the prophets failed not to discriminate as justly as if their description had been drawn both with all the accuracy which ocular observation, and all the certainty which authenticated history could give. And the authority, so often quoted, may here again be appealed to. Volney (though, like one who in ancient times was instrumental to the fulfilment of a special prediction, "he meant not so, neither did his heart think so") from the manner in which he generalizes his observations, and marks the peculiar features of the different districts of Syria, with greater acuteness and perspicuity than any other traveller whatever, is the ever-ready purveyor of evidence in all the cases which came within the range of his topographical description of the wide field of prophecy; while, at the same time, from his known, open, and zealous hostility to the Christian cause, his testimony is alike decisive and unquestionable; and the vindication of the truth of the following predictions may safely be committed to this redoubted champion of infidelity.

The sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks. The remnant of the Philistines shall perish. Baldness is come upon Gaza; it shall be forsaken. The king shall perish from Gaza. I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod. Ashkelon shall be a desolation; it shall be cut off with the remnant of the valley; it shall not be inhabited. "In the plain between Ramla and Gaza," (the very plain of the Philistines

[1] Zeph. ii. 4, 5, 6. [2] Zech. ix. 5.

along the sea-coast) "we met with a number of villages, badly built of dried mud, and which, like the inhabitants, exhibit every mark of poverty and wretchedness. The houses, on a nearer view, are only so many huts, (cottages,) sometimes detached, at others ranged in the form of cells, around a courtyard, enclosed by a mud wall. In winter, they and their cattle may be said to live together, the part of the dwelling allotted to themselves being only raised two feet above that in which they lodge their beasts—(*dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.*) Except the environs of these villages, all the rest of the country is a *desert*, and abandoned to the Bedouin Arabs, who feed their flocks on it."[1] *The remnant* shall perish; the land of the Philistines shall be destroyed that there shall be no inhabitant, and the *sea-coast* shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.

"The ruins of white marble sometimes found at Gaza, prove that it was formerly the abode of luxury and opulence. It has shared in the general destruction; and, notwithstanding its proud title of the capital of Palestine, it is now no more than a defenceless village," (*baldness has come upon it,*) "peopled by, at most, only two thousand inhabitants."[2] *It is forsaken and bereaved of its king.* "The sea-coast, by which it was formerly washed, is every day removing farther from the *deserted ruins* of Ashkelon."[3] *It shall be a desolation. Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.* "Amidst the various successive ruins, those of Edzoud, (Ashdod,) so powerful under the Philistines, are now remarkable for their scorpions."[4] *The inhabitants shall be cut off from Ashdod.*

Although the Christian traveller must yield the palm to Volney,[5] as the topographer of prophecy, and although

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 335, 336. [2] Ibid. p. 340.
[3] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 338. [4] Ibid.

[5] Had Volney been a believer; had he "sought out of the book of the Lord and read;" and had he applied all the facts which he knew in illustration of the prophecies, how completely would he have proved their inspiration! But it is well for the cause of truth, that such a witness was himself an unbeliever; for his evi-

supplementary evidence be not requisite, yet a place is here willingly given to the following just observations.

"Ashkelon was one of the proudest satrapies of the lords of the Philistines; now there is not an inhabitant within its walls; and the prophecy of Zechariah is fulfilled. The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. When the prophecy was uttered, both cities were in an equally flourishing condition; and nothing but the prescience of Heaven could pronounce on which of the two, and in what manner, the vial of its wrath should be poured out. Gaza is truly without a king. The lofty towers of Ashkelon lie scattered on the ground, and the ruins within its walls do not shelter a human being. How is the wrath of man made to praise his Creator! Hath he said, and shall he not do it? The oracle was delivered by the mouth of the prophet more than five hundred years before the Christian era, and we behold its accomplishment eighteen hundred years after that event."[1]

Cogent and just as the reasoning is, the facts stated by Volney give wider scope for an irresistible argument. The fate of one city is not only distinguished from that of another; but the varied aspect of the country itself, the dwellings and cottages for shepherds in one part, and that very region named; the rest of the land destroyed and uninhabited, a desert, and abandoned to the flocks of the wandering Arabs; Gaza, bereaved of a king, a defenceless village, destitute of all its fortifications; Ashkelon, a desolation, and without an inhabitant; the inhabitants also cut off from Ashdod, as reptiles tenanted it instead of men,—form in each instance a specific predic-

dence, in many an instance, comes so very close to the predictions, that his testimony in the relation of positive facts would have been utterly discredited, and held as purposely adapted to the very words of prophecy, by those who otherwise lent a greedy ear to his utterance of some of the wildest fancies and most gross untruths that ever emanated from the mind of man, or ever entered into a deceitful heart. He who so artfully could pervert the truth, falls the victim of facts stated by himself.

[1] Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 204.

tion, and a recorded fact, and present such a view of the existing state of Philistia, as renders it difficult to determine, from the strictest accordance that prevails between both, whether the inspired penman, or the defamer of Scripture, gives the more vivid description. Nor is there any obscurity whatever, in any one of the circumstances, or in any part of the proof. The coincidence is too glaring, even for wilful blindness not to discern; and to all, the least versed in general history, the priority of the predictions to the events is equally obvious. And such was the natural fertility of the country, and such was the strength and celebrity of the cities, that no conjecture possessing the least shadow of plausibility can be formed in what manner any of these events could possibly have been thought of, even for many centuries after "the vision and prophecy" were sealed. After that period, Gaza defied the power of Alexander the Great, and withstood for two months a hard-pressed siege. The army, with which he soon afterwards overthrew the Persian empire, having there, as well as at Tyre, been checked or delayed in the first flush of conquest, and he himself having been twice wounded in desperate attempts to storm the city, the proud and enraged king of Macedon, with all the cruelty of a brutish heart, and boasting of himself as a second Achilles, dragged at his chariot-wheels the intrepid general who had defended it, twice around the walls of Gaza.[1] Ashkelon was no less celebrated for the excellence of its wines than for the strength of its fortifications.[2] And of Ashdod, it is related by an eminent ancient historian, not only that it was a great city, but that it withstood the longest siege recorded in history, (it may almost be said, either of prior or of later date,) having been besieged for the space of twenty-nine years by Psammetichus, king of Egypt.[3] Strabo, after the commencement of the Christian era, classes its citizens among the chief inhabitants

[1] Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. xxvi.
[2] Relandi Palæst. pp. 341, 586.
[3] Herodot. Hist. lib. ii. cap. clvii.

of Syria. Each of these cities, Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ashdod, was the see of a bishop, from the days of Constantine to the invasion of the Saracens. And, as a decisive proof of their existence as cities, long subsequent to the delivery of the predictions, it may further be remarked, that different coins of each of these very cities are extant, and are copied and described in several accounts of ancient coins.[1] The once princely magnificence of Gaza is still attested by the "ruins of white marble;" and the house of the present Aga is composed of fragments of ancient columns, cornices, &c.; and in the court-yard, and immured in the wall, are shafts and capitals of granite columns.[2]

In short, *cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks*, partially scattered along the *sea-coasts*, are now truly the best substitutes for populous cities, that the once powerful realm of Philistia can produce: and the *remnant* of that land, which gave titles and grandeur to the lords of the Philistines, *is destroyed*. *Gaza*, the chief of its satrapies, "the abode of luxury and opulence," now *bereaved of its king, and bald* of all its fortifications, is the defenceless residence of a subsidiary ruler of a devastated province; and, in kindred degradation, ornaments of its once splendid edifices are now bedded in a wall that forms an enclosure for beasts. A handful of men could now take unobstructed possession of that place, where a strong city opposed the entrance and defied for a time the power of the conqueror of the world. The walls, the dwellings, and the people of *Ashkelon* have all perished; and though its name was, in the time of the crusades, shouted in triumph throughout every land in Europe, it is now literally *without an inhabitant*. And *Ashdod*, which withstood a siege treble the duration of that of Troy, and thus outrivalled far the boast of Alexander at Gaza, has, in verification of "the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword," been *cut off*, and has fallen before it to nothing.

[1] Relandi Palæst. pp. 595, 609, 797.
[2] General Straton's MS.

There is yet another city which was noted by the prophets, the very want of any information respecting which, and the absence of its name from several modern maps of Palestine, while the sites of other ruined cities are marked, are really the best confirmation of the truth of the prophecy that could possibly be given. *Ekron shall be rooted up.* It is rooted up. It was one of the chief cities of the Philistines; but though Gaza still subsists, and while Ashkelon and Ashdod retain their names in their ruins, the very name of Ekron is missing.[1]

The wonderful contrast in each particular, whether in respect to the land, or to the cities of the Philistines, is the exact counterpart of the literal prediction; and, having the testimony of Volney to all the facts, and also indisputable evidence of the great priority of the predictions to the events, what more complete or clearer proof could there be, that each and all of these predictions emanated from the prescience of Heaven? And yet, though previously unthought of by the writer, a more complete proof may be given.

Of the truth of the prophecies concerning tenantless Ashkelon and uprooted Ekron, there cannot be a doubt: but a question may arise whether baldness, in the full meaning of the word, has come upon Gaza, the only remaining town in Philistia, or whether that city, however fallen from its former greatness, can strictly be said to be forsaken, if peopled, like the modern town, by 2000 inhabitants. But, as in some other instances, the author has been driven from a comparatively vague or undefined to a strictly literal interpretation.

[1] In the map prefixed to Dr. Shaw's Travels, Akron is indeed marked; but it is placed close upon the sea-coast, whereas Ekron was situated in the interior, and was at least ten miles distant. Shaw did not visit the spot. Dr. Richardson passed some ruins near to Ashdod, and conjectures that they were *probably Ekron.* But neither does the site of them correspond with that of Ekron, which, according to Eusebius, lay between Ashdod and Jamnia, towards the *east* or inland. (Vide Relandi Palæst. p. 77.) Any diversity of opinion respecting its site is not the least conclusive proof that it is *rooted up.*

Baldness shall come upon Gaza. It shall be forsaken. The writer, after having unconsciously rested a night on the site of ancient Gaza, as the smoothest place that could be chosen whereon to pitch a tent, was for the first time aware of the literal interpretation of the prophecy, when he saw it on the spot. Detained for a day till camels could be procured, (the plague being then prevalent at Gaza,) the author spent it in traversing the sand-hills on which the manifold but minute remains of an ancient city are yet in many places to be seen. Though previously holding to the interpretation given above, and not imagining that any clearer illustration could be given, and ignorant or forgetful at the time of any historical testimony that the site of modern differed from that of ancient Gaza, it was impossible for him to doubt that a city had once stood where innumerable vestiges of it are to be seen. The débris of ruins recognised at first sight by every traveller in the east, as clearly indicating the site of an ancient city, are abundant, but most minute. Innumerable fragments of broken pottery, pieces of glass, (some of which were beautifully painted,) of polished marble, and fused stones, as if they had come forth from a furnace, lie thickly spread in every level and hollow place not buried under sand, at a considerable elevation and various distances, on a space more than two miles in length, and nearly a mile in breadth. These obvious indications of the site of an ancient city, recurring over a wide extent, are so abundant, that the number of different places in which they profusely lie can scarcely be reckoned under fifty, yet uncovered by the sand, which not unfrequently surmounts them on every side. They generally occupy a level space, far firmer than the surrounding sand, and vary in size from small patches to more open spaces of twelve or twenty thousand square yards. The successive sand-hills, or rather the same oblong sand-hill, greatly varied in its elevation, and of an undulated surface, throughout which they recur, extends, on the west and west-south-west, from the environs of the modern Gaza nearly to the sea.

Before approaching Gaza, unconscious where the ancient city stood, it might well be asked what is meant by baldness coming upon it. But having traversed the place on which it stood, and beholding it as it rises naked and bare above the plain, its perfect baldness shows how truly that word of the Lord rests upon it. The writer looked in vain for any fragment of ruin one cubic foot in size, for any shrub, or plant, or blade of grass, to relieve or interrupt the perfect baldness that has come on Gaza. He saw nothing but a jackal freely coursing over its bare surface. The sand of the desert is nowhere more smooth and bare; and the dark spots, where nothing but the vestiges of ruins lie, are so flat and level, that they form no exception to its *baldness*.

Many of the ruins, it may well be imagined, lie buried in the sand; those that remained above the surface have been carried away, and may be found in the close vicinity, imbedded in the walls of houses or court-yards of the comparatively modern town.

Nothing but historical testimony to the fact, that the site of the modern town differed from that of the ancient city, seems requisite to complete the proof that Gaza once flourished where baldness now reigns. And the geographer Strabo, who lived at the commencement of the Christian era, in describing the coast of Syria, records: "Afterwards is the port of Gaza, and at the distance of seven furlongs the city, formerly illustrious, which was destroyed by Alexander, *and remaining desert.*"[1] The distance of seven stadia from the shore would have formed about the centre of the ancient city, as now seen by its rubbish. But the modern town lies at the distance of about three miles. Ancient writers, not distinguishing between them, seem sometimes to have confounded the one site with the other. Jerome relates that, in his time, the beginning of the fifth century, scarcely a vestige existed of the ancient city, and that

[1] Εἶθ' ὁ τῶν Γαζαίων λιμὴν πλησίον· ὑπέρκειται δὲ καὶ ἡ πόλις ἐν ἑπτὰ σταδίοις, ἔνδοξός ποτε γενομένη, κατεσπασμένη δ' ὑπὸ Αλέξανδρου, καὶ μένουσα ἔρημος. Strabo, tom. ii. p. 1080. Ed. Fal.

which was then seen, was built in another place, instead of the city which was utterly ruined.[1] In the extracts from ancient authors whose age is uncertain, edited by Hudson, in the fourth volume of the lesser geographers, distinct mention is made of *new Gaza*, and of *desert Gaza*.[2] Of the same place (rather than of the road) the apostle Paul speaks, under the same name, of Gaza which is *desert*. The very appellation it thus received, as recorded or described by Strabo and another Greek geographer, as well as in the Acts of the Apostles, and which most emphatically and truly describes it in one word,[3]—for no *desert* can be more bare,—shows how *baldness has come upon it*. It is worthy also of remark, as Arrian relates, that the city besieged by Alexander was great, and situated on a height; and that the access to it was very difficult, on account of the height of the sand,[4]—facts precisely applicable to the site above described, of ancient, or desert Gaza, but not of new Gaza.

Desert and desolate, as it has long been and still lies, not tenanted either by man or beast, *Gaza is forsaken.*

I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces thereof. Among the vestiges and fragments of ruins, many pieces of scoriæ, or fused lime and stone, reticulated, and as manifestly burnt as if they had passed through a furnace, are to be found (some specimens of which the writer yet retains) intermingled with small fragments of marble, some of which also, as seen by him, were evidently scathed, or bore the marks of fire. A fire, assuredly, has come upon Gaza, and has consumed the palaces thereof. The local, geographical, and existing illustrations of the fulfilment of prophecy, are often as precisely literal as those which repeatedly

[1] Antiqua civitatis locum vix fundamentorum præbere vestigia, hanc autem quæ nunc cernitur in alio loco, pro illâ quæ corruit ædificatam. Hieron. tom. iii. p. 218.

[2] Relandi Palæstina, tom. i. p. 509.

[3] — πολις μένουσα ΄ΕΡΗΜΟΣ. Strabo.
΄Η ΄ΕΡΗΜΟΣ Γάζα. Rel. Pal. tom. i. p. 509.
— εἰς Γάζαν· αὕτη ἐστιν ΄ΕΡΗΜΟΣ. Acts viii. 26.

[4] Arrian, lib. ii. 26.

occur in the historical parts of Scripture,—and more literal than these, as patent to every reader, they cannot possibly be. Ancient Gaza, the once lordly city of the Philistines, which oppressed the people of Israel, is *desert and forsaken.* Minute fragments of broken pottery, brick, glass, and marble, and undistinguishable vitrified matter, mingled with sand, show how utterly the pride of human power shall be broken; how lowly all must lie who strive against the Lord, how fiercely the fire of his jealousy and justice burns up all on which it lights; and how the ruins of once royal cities, their day of glory gone, show that HIS word is that of the Eternal King.

The remaining boundary of Judea was the mountains of LEBANON on the north. Lebanon was celebrated for the extent of its forests, and particularly for the size and excellency of its cedars.[1] It abounded also with the pine, the cypress, and the vine, &c. But, describing what it now is, Volney says, "Towards Lebanon the mountains are lofty, but they are covered in many places with as much earth as fits them for cultivation by industry and labour. There, amid the crags of the rocks, may be seen the no very magnificent remains of the boasted cedars."[2] The words of the prophets of Israel

[1] Relandi Palæst. pp. 320, 379. Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. vi.

[2] Travels, vol. i. p. 292. Volney remarks, in a note, that there are but four or five of those trees which deserve any notice; and in a note, it may be added, from the words of Isaiah, *the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.* (Isa. x. 19.) Could not the infidel write a brief note, or state a minute fact, without giving a literal interpretation to an apparently symbolical prophecy? Maundrell, who visited Lebanon in the end of the seventeenth century, and to whose accuracy in other matters all subsequent travellers who refer to him bear witness, describes some of the cedars near the top of the mountain as "very old, and of a prodigious bulk, and others younger of a smaller size." Of the former he could reckon up only sixteen. He measured the largest, and found it about twelve yards in girth. Such trees, however few in number, show that the *cedars of Lebanon* had once been no vain boast. But after the lapse of more than a century, not a single tree of such dimensions is now to be seen. Of those which now remain, as visited by Captains Irby and Mangles, there

answer the sarcasm, and convert it into a testimony of the truth: "Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down. The high ones of stature shall be hewn down: Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one."[1] "Upon the mountains, and in all the valleys, his branches are fallen; to the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs."[2] "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. The cedar is fallen; the forest of the vintage is come down."[3]

Such are the prophecies which explicitly and avowedly refer to the land of Judea, and to the surrounding states. And such are the facts drawn from the narratives of travellers, and given, in general, in their own words, which substantiate their truth; though without any allusion, but in a few solitary instances, to the predictions which they amply verify. The most unsuspected evidence has been selected; and the far greater part is so fully corroborated, and illustrated by other testimony, as to bid defiance to skepticism. The prophecies and the proofs of their fulfilment are so numerous, that it is impossible to concentrate them in a single view, without the exclusion of many; and they are, upon a simple comparison, so obvious and striking, that any attempt at their farther elucidation must hazard the obscuring of their clearness, and the enfeebling of their force. There is no ambiguity in the prophecies themselves, for they can bear no other interpretation but what is descriptive of the actual events. There can be no question of their genuineness or antiquity, for the countries whose future history they unveiled contained several millions of inhabitants, and numerous flourishing cities, at a period centuries subsequent to the delivery, the translation, and publication of the prophecies, and when the regular and public perusal of their Scriptures was the law and the

are about fifty in whole, on a single small eminence, from which spot the cedars are the only trees to be seen in Lebanon. (P. 209.)

[1] Isa. xxxiii. 9, x. 33, 34. [2] Ezek. xxxi. 12, 14. [3] Zech. xi. 1, 2.

practice of the Israelites; and they have only gradually been reduced to their existing state of long-prophesied desolation. There could not possibly have been any human means of the foresight of facts so many and so marvellous; for every natural appearance contradicted and every historical fact condemned the supposition: and nothing but continued oppression and a succession of worse than Gothic desolaters, no government on earth but the Turkish, no spoliators but the Arabs, could have converted such natural fertility into such utter and permanent desolation. Could it have been foreseen, that after the lapse of some hundred years, no interval of prosperity or peaceful security would occur throughout many ensuing generations, to revive its deadened energies, or to rescue from uninterrupted desolation one of the richest and one of the most salubrious regions of the world, which the greater part of these territories naturally is? Could the present aspect of any country, with every alterable feature changed, and with every altered feature marked, have been delineated by different uninspired mortals, in various ages from 2200 to 3300 years past? And there could not, so far as all researches have hitherto reached, be a more triumphant demonstration, from existing facts, of the truth of manifold prophecies. In reference to the complete *historical* truth of the predictions respecting the successive kings of Syria and Egypt, Bishop Newton emphatically remarks, (as Sir Isaac Newton's observations had previously proved,) that there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any author of these times; that the prophecy is really more perfect than any single history, and that no one historian has related so many circumstances as the prophet has foretold: so that "it was necessary to have recourse to several authors for the better explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in the prophecy." The same remark, in the same words, may, more obviously and with equal truth, be now applied to the *geographical*, as well as to the historical proof of the truth of prophecy.

Judea, which, before the age of the prophets, had, from the uniformity and peculiarity of its government and laws, remained unvaried in a manner and to a degree unusual among nations, has since undergone many convulsions, and has for many generations been unceasingly subjected to reiterated spoliation. And now, after the lapse of more than twenty centuries, travellers see what prophets foretold. Each prediction is fulfilled in all its particulars, so far as the facts have (and in almost every case they have) been made known. But while the recent discoveries of many travellers have disclosed the state of these countries, each of their accounts presents only an imperfect delineation; and a variety of these must be combined before they bring fully into view all those diversified, discriminating, and characteristic features of the extensive scene, which were vividly depicted of old, in all their minute lines and varied shades, by the pencil of prophecy, and which set before us, as it were, the history, the land, and the people of Palestine.

Judea, trodden down by successive desolaters; remaining uncultivated from generation to generation; the general devastation of the country; the mouldering ruins of its many cities; the cheerless solitude of its once happy plains; the wild produce of its luxuriant mountains; the land covered with thorns; the highways waste and untrodden; its ancient possessors scattered abroad;—the inhabitants thereof depraved in character, few in number, eating their bread with carefulness, or in constant dread of the spoiler or oppressor;—the insecurity of property; the uselessness of labour; the poverty of their revenues; the land emptied and despoiled; instrumental music ceased from among them; the mirth of the land gone; the use of wine prohibited in a land of vines, and the wine itself bitter unto them that drink it;—some very partial exceptions from universal desolation, some rescued remnants, like the gleanings of a field, and emblems of the departed glory of Judea:—the devastation of the land of Ammon; the extinction of the Ammonites, the destruction of all their cities; their country a spoil

to the heathen, and a perpetual desolation:—the desolation of Moab, its cities without any to dwell therein, and no city escaped; the valley perished, the plain destroyed; the wanderers that have come up against it, and that cause its inhabitants to wander; the manner of the spoliation of the dwellers in Moab, their danger and insecurity in the plain country, and flying to the rocks for a refuge and a home, while flocks lie down among the ruins of the cities, none there to make them afraid; and the despoiled and impoverished condition of some of its wretched wanderers:—Idumea the scene of an unparalleled and irrecoverable desolation; its cities utterly abandoned and destroyed; of the greater part of them no traces left; a desolate wilderness, over which the line of confusion is stretched out; the country bare; no kingdom there; its princes and nobles nothing, and empty sepulchres their only memorials; thistles and thorns in its palaces; a border of wickedness, and yet greatly despised; wisdom perished from Teman, and understanding out of the mount of Esau; abandoned to birds, and beasts, and reptiles, specified by name; its ancient possessors cut off for ever, and no one remaining of the house of Esau:—the destruction of the cities of the Philistines; cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks, along the sea-coasts; the remnant of the plain destroyed and unoccupied by any fixed inhabitants:—Lebanon ashamed; its cedars, few and diminutive, now a mockery instead of a praise;—and, finally, the different fate of many cities particularly defined; the long subjection of Jerusalem to the gentiles;—Samaria desolate, as an heap of the field, or cast down into the valley, and its foundations discovered, all so clearly marked, both in the prophecy and on the spot, that they serve to fix its site;—Rabbah-Ammon, the capital of the Ammonites, now a desolate heap, a pasture for camels, and a couching-place for flocks;—the chief city of Edom brought down, a court for owls, and no man dwelling in it;—Gaza forsaken, and baldness come upon it; bearing the marks of the fire which has devoured its palaces;—Ashkelon

desolate, without an inhabitant; and Ekron rooted up: these are all ancient prophecies, and these are all present facts, which form of themselves a phalanx of evidence which all the shafts of infidelity can never pierce.

Though the countries included in these predictions comprehend a field of prophecy extending over upwards of one hundred and twenty thousand square miles, the existing state of every part of which bears witness of their truth; yet the prophets, as inspired by the God of nations, foretold the fate of mightier monarchies, of more extensive regions, and of more powerful cities; and there is not a people, nor a country, nor a capital, which was then known to the Israelites, whose future history they did not clearly reveal. And, instead of adducing arguments from the preceding very abundant materials, or drawing those facts already adduced to their legitimate conclusion, they may be left in their native strength, like the unhewn adamant; and we may pass to other proofs which also show that the temple of Christian faith rests upon a rock that cannot be shaken.

CHAPTER VI.

NINEVEH.

To a brief record of the creation of the antediluvian world, and of the dispersion and the different settlements of mankind after the deluge, the Scriptures of the Old Testament add a full and particular history of the Hebrews for the space of fifteen hundred years, from the days of Abraham to the era of the last of the prophets. While the historical part of Scripture thus traces, from its origin, the history of the world, the prophecies give a prospective view which reaches to its end. And it is remarkable that profane history, emerging from fable,

becomes clear and authentic about the very period when sacred history terminates, and when the fulfilment of those prophecies commences which refer to other nations besides the Jews.

Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was for a long time an extensive and populous city. Its walls are said, by heathen historians, to have been a hundred feet in height, sixty miles in compass, and to have been defended by fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high.[1] Although it formed the subject of some of the earliest of the prophecies, and was the very first which met its predicted fate; yet a heathen historian, in describing its capture and destruction, repeatedly refers to an ancient prediction respecting it. Diodorus Siculus relates, that the king of Assyria, after the complete discomfiture of his army, confided in an old prophecy, that Nineveh would not be taken unless the river should become the enemy of the city;[2] that, after an ineffectual siege of two years, the river, swollen with long-continued and tempestuous torrents, inundated part of the city and threw down the wall for the space of twenty furlongs; and that the king, deeming the prediction accomplished, despaired of his safety, and erected an immense funeral pile, on which he heaped his wealth, and with which himself, his household, and palace, were consumed.[3] The book of Nahum was avowedly prophetic of the destruction of Nineveh: and it is there foretold that "the gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved." "Nineveh, of old, like a pool of water—with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of

[1] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 12, 13. See Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. xx. c. 252; Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. ii. p. 56, 57; Bishop Newton, Gibbon, &c. Strabo, whose testimony also has been often repeated, states that it was larger than Babylon. "It must be owned," says Calmet, "that Nineveh was one of the most ancient, the most famous, the most potent, and the largest cities of the world."

[2] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. pp. 82, 83, edit. Wessel. 1793. See Univ. Hist. vol. iv. pp. 305—8, v. 37, &c.; Bishop Newton, p. 134, 13th edition.

[3] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 84. Poole, Univ. Hist. ibid.; Bishop Newton

the place thereof."[1] The historian describes the facts by which the other predictions of the prophet were as literally fulfilled. He relates that the king of Assyria, elated with his former victories, and ignorant of the revolt of the Bactrians, had abandoned himself to scandalous inaction; had appointed a time of festivity, and supplied his soldiers with abundance of wine; and that the general of the enemy, apprised by deserters of their negligence and drunkenness, attacked the Assyrian army while the whole of them were fearlessly giving way to indulgence, destroyed great part of them, and drove the rest into the city.[2] The words of the prophet were hereby verified: "While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry."[3] The prophet promised much spoil to the enemy: "Take the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is no end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture."[4] And the historian affirms, that many talents of gold and silver preserved from the fire, were carried to Ecbatana.[5] According to Nahum, the city was not only to be destroyed by an overflowing flood, but the fire also was to devour it;[6] and, as Diodorus relates, partly by water, partly by fire, it was destroyed.[7]

[1] Nahum ii. 6, 8, i. 8.

[2] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. pp. 81, 84. Univ. Hist. vol. iv. pp. 305–308.

[3] Nahum i. 10. [4] Nahum ii. 9.

[5] Diod. p. 87. "The two armies," says Rollin, after quoting this prophecy, "enriched themselves with the spoils of Nineveh." Vol. ii. p. 103. Bishop Newton.

[6] Nahum iii. 15.

[7] See Bishop Newton's Dissertation ix. Nineveh, which first led Israel captive, was the first city of the gentiles that met its predicted fate. The fulfilment of the prophecies concerning it, which are all contained in the short book of Nahum, and in three verses of Zephaniah, was too remarkable to pass unnoticed in the earliest ages of our era. Josephus, after briefly describing the reign of Jotham, states, that "there was at that time a prophet, named Nahum, who prophesied thus of the catastrophe or overthrow of Nineveh, 'Nineveh shall be a pool of water agitated,' &c., Nahum ii. 8—13; and he adds, that the prophet foretold many other things which it was unnecessary for him to repeat, and

The utter and perpetual destruction and desolation of Nineveh were foretold: "The Lord will make an utter end of the place thereof. Affliction shall not rise up the second time. She is empty, and void, and waste. The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!"[1] In the second century, Lucian, a native of a city on the banks of the Euphrates, testified that Nineveh was utterly perished; that there was no vestige of it remaining; and that none could tell where once it was situate.[2] This testimony of Lucian, and the lapse of many ages during which the place was not known where it stood, render it at least somewhat doubtful whether the remains

which were all fulfilled after the lapse of a hundred and fifteen years." Ant. lib. ix. c. xi. § 3. Jerome, (A. D. 392,) in his preface to the book of Jonah, relates, that both Hebrew and Greek historians recorded its overthrow. (Tom. vi. c. 399, 390, ed. Venet. 1768.) And in his commentary on Nahum, he repeatedly refers to its capture and spoliation by the Chaldeans, or Babylonians, in illustration of the prophecy. Ibid. c. 534, 555, &c. In like manner, Cyril of Alexandria, (A. D. 412,) in his commentary on the the same prophecy, quoted by Bochart, describes not only the destruction of Nineveh, but, in terms analogous to those of Lucian, its entire desolation. Besides other intervening writers, who treat of the subject, Bochart, Marsham, and Poole, in the seventeenth century, adduced the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, who has long been the chief authority upon the subject, although his testimony in regard to the magnificence and subsequent destruction of Nineveh is corroborated by that of Herodotus, Strabo, Tacitus, Pliny, &c. The fall of Nineveh is described, and the prophecies both of Nahum and Zephaniah, thereby illustrated, are quoted or referred to in such well-known works, published in the last century, as Prideaux's Connections, (A. D. 1715,) Rollin's Ancient History, (A. D. 1730,) The Universal History, (A. D. 1747,) and Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, (A. D. 1754,) the last of which, the latest and the best, is referred to in every edition. The edition of Diodorus Siculus, from which the facts were quoted and the references taken, was published forty years after the last of these works. The facts, like the prophecies, are few, and are all included in a few pages, to which the index readily points in every edition of his works.

[1] Nahum i. 8, 9, ii. 10; Zeph. ii. 13, 14, 15.

[2] Bochart, Marsham, Calmet, Bishop Newton, &c.

of an ancient city, opposite to Mosul, which have been described as such by travellers, be indeed those of ancient Nineveh. The name, however, was attached to the spot by the inhabitants of the country in the beginning of the seventh century. The battle of Nineveh decided the fate of Chosroes. Its locality is thus described by Gibbon:—"The Romans boldly advanced from the Araxes to the Tigris, and the timid prudence of Rhazates was content to follow them by forced marches through a desolate country, till he received a peremptory mandate to risk the fate of Persia in a decisive battle. Eastward of the Tigris, at the end of the bridge of Mosul, *the great Nineveh* had formerly been erected: *the city, and even the ruins of the city had long since disappeared; the* VACANT SPACE [*empty, void, and waste*] afforded a spacious field for the operation of the two armies."[1] The great city had become "the field" of Nineveh. An *utter ruin* had been made of it at once; *affliction did not rise up a second time.* "One thing is sufficiently obvious to the most careless observer," says Rich, who was himself a most careful observer, "which is, the equality of age of all these vestiges. Whether they belonged to Nineveh or some other city, is another question, and one not so easily determined; but that they are all of the same age and character does not admit of a doubt."[2] "Pottery, and other Babylonian fragments"—"fragments of cuneiform inscriptions on stone, similar in every respect to those got at Babylon,"[3] are found in the mounds that constitute the ruins. In contrasting the then existing great and increasing population, and the accumulating wealth of the proud inhabitants of the mighty Nineveh, with the utter ruin that awaited it,—the word of God (before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers) by Nahum was—"Make thyself many as the canker-worm, make thyself many as the locusts. Thou

[1] Hist. vol. viii. pp. 250, 251, c. 46.
[2] Rich's Residence in Koordistan and Nineveh, vol. ii. p. 44.
[3] Ibid. p. 38, 55.

hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm spoileth and fleeth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers which camp in the hedges in the cold day; but when the sun riseth, they flee away; and their place is not known where they are," or were. Whether these words imply that even the site of Nineveh would in future ages be uncertain or unknown, or, as they rather seem to intimate, that every vestige of the palaces of its monarchs, of the greatness of its nobles, and of the wealth of its numerous merchants, would wholly disappear; the truth of the prediction cannot be invalidated under either interpretation. The avowed ignorance respecting Nineveh, and the oblivion which passed over it, for many an age, conjoined with the meagerness of evidence to identify it still, prove that the place was long unknown where it stood, and that even now it can scarcely with certainty be determined. And, if the only spot that bears its name, or that can be said to be the place where it was, be indeed the site of one of the most extensive of cities on which the sun ever shone, and which continued for many centuries to be the capital of Assyria,—the "principal mounds," few in number, in many places overgrown with grass, "resemble the mounds left by entrenchments and fortifications of ancient Roman camps," and the *appearances* of other mounds and ruins, less marked than even these, extending for ten miles, and widely spread, and seeming to be "the wreck of former buildings,"[1] show that Nineveh is left without one monument of royalty, without any token or memorial of its ancient splendour and magnificence; and so entirely are the very vestiges of the city in many places swept away, that of a large space which the plough has passed over for ages, it is said, "what part was covered by ancient Nineveh it is nearly now impossible to ascertain."[2] "The country," "this uneven country," are epithets descriptive of its supposed site. "In such a country it is not easy to

[1] Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. 49, 51, 62.
[2] Rich's Residence in Koordistan, vol. ii. p. 53.

say what are ruins and what are not; what is art converted by the lapse of ages into a semblance of nature, and what is merely nature broken by the hand of time into ruins approaching in their appearance those of art."[1] Of the merchants, that were multiplied above the stars of heaven; of the crowned and of the captains of the great Nineveh, it may be said, that they were as the great grasshoppers, which, camping in the hedges in a cold day, flee away on the rising of the sun, and their place is not known where they were. Neither from the low grounds, covered with bushes of tamarisk, where it is not cultivated,[2] nor from the high country completely covered with pebbles,[3] could it be known where the nobles of Nineveh were. "The *name* of Nineveh," said Volney, "seems to be threatened with the same oblivion which has overtaken its greatness."[4] *The Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown. I will make thy grave, for thou art vile. Darkness shall pursue his enemies.*[5] The great Nineveh is no more. No more of its name is sown: the town near to its site is called by another name. But its name, written in the word of God, shall not pass into oblivion, till tongues shall cease and prophecy fail

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BABYLON.

If ever there was a city that seemed to bid defiance to any predictions of its fall, that city was Babylon. It was for a long time the most famous city in the whole world.[6] Its walls, which were reckoned among the wonders of the world, appeared rather like the bulwarks

[1] Rich's Residence in Koordistan, vol. ii. p. 57.
[2] Ibid. p. 62.
[3] Ibid. p. 59.
[4] Ruins, c. 8.
[5] Nahum i. 8, 14.
[6] Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. v. cap. xxvi.

of nature than the workmanship of man.[1] The temple of Belus, half a mile in circumference and a furlong in height; the hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls; the embankments which restrained the Euphrates; the hundred brazen gates; and the adjoining artificial lake; all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single point.[2] Yet, while in the plenitude of its power, and, according to the most accurate chronologers, 160 years before the foot of an enemy had entered it, the voice of prophecy pronounced the doom of the mighty and unconquered Babylon. A succession of ages brought it gradually to the dust; and the gradation of its fall is marked till it sunk at last into utter desolation. At a time when nothing but magnificence was around Babylon the great, fallen Babylon was delineated exactly as every traveller now describes its ruins. And the prophecies concerning it may be viewed con-

[1] The extent of the walls of Babylon is variously stated, by Herodotus at 480 stadia, or furlongs, in circumference; by Pliny and Solinus at sixty Roman miles, or of equal extent; by Strabo at 385 stadia: by Diodorus Siculus, according to the slightly different testimony of Ctesias and Clitarchus, both of whom visited Babylon, at 360 or 365; and to the last of these statements that of Quintus Curtius nearly corresponds, viz. 368. The difference of a few stadia rather confirms than disproves the general accuracy of the last three of these accounts. There may have been an error in the text of Herodotus of 480, instead of 380, which Pliny and Solinus may have copied. The variation of 20 or 25 stadia, in excess, may have been caused by the line of measurement having been the outside of the trench, and not immediately of the wall. And thus the various statements may be brought nearly to correspond. Major Rennel, estimating the stadium at 491 feet, computes the extent of the wall at 34 miles, or eight and a half on each side. The opposite and contradictory statements of the height and breadth of the wall may possibly be best reconciled on the supposition that they refer to different periods. Herodotus states the height to have been 200 cubits, or 300 feet, and the breadth 50 cubits, 75 feet. According to Curtius, the height was 130 feet, and the breadth 32; while Strabo states the height at 75 feet, and the breadth at 32 feet.

[2] Herod. lib. i. c. clxxviii; Diodor. Sic. lib. ii. p. 26. (Calmet.) Plin. lib. v. xxvi.; Quintus Curtius, lib. v. c. iv. See Prideaux, Rollin, &c.

nectedly from the period of their earliest to that of their latest fulfilment.

The immense fertility of Chaldea, which retained also the name of Babylonia till after the Christian era,[1] corresponded, if that of any country could vie, with the greatness of Babylon. It was the most fertile region of the whole east.[2] Babylonia was one vast plain, adorned and enriched by the Euphrates and the Tigris, from which, and from the numerous canals that intersected the country from the one river to the other, water was distributed over the fields by manual labour and by hydraulic machines,[3] giving rise, in that warm climate, and rich, exhaustless soil, to an exuberance of produce without a known parallel, over so extensive a region, either in ancient or modern times. Herodotus states, that he knew not how to speak of its wonderful fertility, which none but eye-witnesses would credit; and, though writing in the language of Greece, itself a fertile country, he expresses his own consciousness that his description of what he actually saw would appear to be improbable, and to exceed belief. In his estimation, as well as in that of Strabo and of Pliny, (the three best ancient authorities that can be given,) Babylonia was of all countries the most fertile in corn, the soil never producing less, as he relates, than two hundredfold, an amount, in our colder regions, scarcely credible, though Strabo, the first of ancient geographers, agrees with the "father of history" in recording that it reached even to three hundred, the grain, too, being of prodigious size.[4] After being subjected to Persia, the government of Chaldea was accounted the noblest in the Persian empire.[5] Besides supplying horses for military service, it maintained about seventeen thousand horses for the sovereign's use. And, exclusive of monthly subsidies, the supply from

1 Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743.

2 "Agrum totius orientis fertilissimum." (Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. xxvi.)

3 Herod. lib. i. c. cxcii.

4 Herod. lib. i. c. cxcii; Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 742.

5 Herod. lib. i. c. cxcii.

Chaldea (including perhaps Syria) for the subsistence of the king and of his army, amounted to a third part of all that was levied from the whole of the Persian dominions, which at that time extended from the Hellespont to India.[1] Herodotus incidentally mentions that there were four great towns in the vicinity of Babylon.

Such was the "Chaldee's excellency," that it departed not on the first conquest, nor on the final extinction of its capital, but one metropolis of Assyria arose after another in the land of Chaldea, when Babylon had ceased to be "the glory of kingdoms." The celebrated city of Seleucia, whose ruins attest its former greatness, was *founded* and *built* by Seleucus Nicator, king of Assyria, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, in the year before Christ 293,—three centuries after Jeremiah prophesied. In the first century of the Christian era it contained six hundred thousand inhabitants.[2] The Parthian kings transferred the seat of empire to Ctesiphon, on the opposite bank of the Tigris, where they resided in winter; and that city, formerly a village, became great and powerful.[3] Six centuries after the latest of the predictions, Chaldea could also boast of other great cities,[4] such as Artemita and Sitacene, besides many towns. When invaded by Julian, it was, as described by Gibbon, a "fruitful and pleasant country." And, at a period equally distant from the time of the prophets and from the present day, in the seventh century, Chaldea was the scene of vast magnificence, in the reign of Chosroes. "His favourite residence of Artemita or Destagered, was situated beyond the Tigris, about sixty miles to the north of the capital (Ctesiphon.) The adjacent pastures," in the words of Gibbon, "were covered with flocks and herds; the paradise, or park, was replenished with pheasants, peacocks, ostriches, roebucks, and wild boars; and the noble game of lions and tigers was sometimes turned loose for the golden pleasures of the chase. Nine hundred and sixty elephants were

[1] Herod. lib. i. c. cxcii.
[2] Plin. lib. vi. c. xxvi.
[3] Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743.
[4] Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 744.

maintained for the use and splendour of the great king, his tents and baggage were carried into the field by twelve thousand great camels, and eight thousand of a smaller size; and the royal stables were filled with six thousand mules and horses. Six thousand guards successively mounted before the palace gate, and the service of the interior apartments was performed by twelve thousand slaves. The various treasures of gold, silver, gems, silk, and aromatics, were deposited in a hundred subterranean vaults."[1] "In the eighth century the town of Samarah, Horounieh, and Djasserik, formed, so to speak, one street of twenty-eight miles."[2] Chaldea, with its rich soil and warm climate, and intersected by the Tigris and Euphrates, was one of the last countries in the world, of which the desolation could have been thought of by man. For to this day "there cannot be a doubt that, if proper means were taken, the *country* would with ease be brought into a high state of cultivation."[3]

Manifold are the prophecies respecting Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans; and the long lapse of ages has served to confirm their fulfilment in every particular, and to render it at last complete. The judgments of Heaven are not casual, but sure; they are not arbitrary, but righteous. And they were denounced against the Babylonians, and the inhabitants of Chaldea, expressly because of their idolatry, tyranny, oppression, pride, covetousness, drunkenness, falsehood, and other wickedness. So debasing and brutifying was their idolatry, —or so much did they render the name of religion subservient to their passions,—that practices the most abominable, which were universal among them, formed

[1] Gibbon's History, vol. viii. c. 46, p. 227, 228.

[2] Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. ii. p. 119. Historical documents are not wanting to prove that the richness of Chaldea, down to the time of the Arabian califs, was such as to give the charm of truth (which, indeed, it is generally admitted that they possess) to many of the splendid descriptions which abound in the otherwise fictitious narratives of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

[3] Bombay Philosophical Transactions, vol. i. p. 124.

the very observance of some of their religious rites, of which even heathen writers could not speak but in terms of indignation and abhorrence. Though enriched with a prodigality of blessings, the glory of God was not regarded by the Chaldeans; and all the glory of man, with which the plain of Shinar was covered, has become, in consequence as well as in chastisement of prevailing vices and of continued though diversified crimes, the wreck, the ruin, and utter desolation which the word of God (for whose word but his?) thus told from the beginning that the event would be.

"The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos did see. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. It shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword. Behold I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance

there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces."[1] "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. Thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch. I will cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts."[2] "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods, he hath broken unto the ground."[3] "Thus saith the Lord that saith unto the deep, be dry; and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure,—and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut."[4] "Bel boweth down,"[5] &c. "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called The lady of kingdoms. Thou hast said, I shall be a lady for ever. Hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly; that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness," &c. "Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall

[1] Isa. xiii. 1, 4, 5, 9, 14—22. [2] Isa. xiv. 4, 11, 15, 19, 22, 23.
[3] Isa. xxi. 9. [4] Isa. xliv. 27, 28, xlv. 1. [5] Isa. xlvi. 1.

upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know."[1]

"I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands."[2] "The word that the Lord spake against Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not; say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast."[3] "For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken; their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil; all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord. Behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues."[4] "Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of the Lord; take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they

[1] Isa. xlvii. 1, 5, 7—11.
[2] Jer. xxv. 12—14.
[3] Jer. l. 1, 2, 3.
[4] Jer. l. 9, 10, 12, 13.

shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land."[1] "Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod; waste and utterly destroy after them. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware; thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord. The Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border, open her store-houses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly; let nothing of her be left."[2] "The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple. Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against her round about: let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord. Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee. And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him."[3] "A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon the liars; a sword is upon her mighty men; a sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her, and they shall become as women; a sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be

[1] Jer. l. 15, 16. [2] Jer. l. 21—26. [3] Jer. l. 28—32.

robbed. A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols. Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. They shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel and will not show mercy; their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride on horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong; but I will make them suddenly run away from her; and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? For who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me? Therefore hear ye the counsel of the Lord, that he hath taken against Babylon, and his purposes that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans; surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.[1] I will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land, for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about. Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against him that lifteth himself up in his brigantine: and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets, &c. Babylon is suddenly

[1] Jer. l. 35—46.

fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one unto his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.[1] The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it, &c. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee.[2] Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and I will make thee a burnt mountain. Set up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her; call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Aschenaz; prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow; *for every purpose* of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds; their might hath failed; they became as women; they have burnt her dwelling-places; her bars are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor: it is time to thresh her; yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come.[3] I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment,

[1] Jer. li. 2, 4, 8, 9. [2] Jer. li. 11, 13, 14.
[3] Jer. li. 25, 27—33.

and an hissing, without an inhabitant. In their heat I will make their feasts, that they may sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake. How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will punish Bel in Babylon; and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea the wall of Babylon shall fall. A rumour shall come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon; and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her, &c.[1] And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burnt with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her."[2]

The enemies who were to besiege Babylon—the cowardice of the Babylonians—the manner in which the city was taken, and all the remarkable circumstances of the siege, were foretold and described by the prophets as the facts are related by ancient historians.

Go up, O Elam (or Persia) *besiege, O Media! The*

[1] Jer. li. 36, 37, 39, 41—44, 46, 47.
[2] Jer. li. 57, 58, 63, 64.

Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon to destroy it.[1] The kings of Persia and Media, prompted by a common interest, freely entered into a league against Babylon, and with one accord intrusted the command of their united armies to Cyrus,[2] the relative and eventually the successor of them both. But the taking of Babylon was not reserved for these kingdoms alone: other nations had to be *prepared against her.*

Set up a standard in the land; blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Aschenaz. Lo, I will raise, and cause to come up against Babylon, an assembly of great nations from the north country, &c.[3] Cyrus subdued the Armenians, who had revolted against Media, spared their king, bound them over anew to their allegiance, by kindness rather than by force, and incorporated their army with his own.[4] He adopted the Hyrcanians, who had rebelled against Babylon, as allies and confederates with the Medes and Persians.[5] He conquered the united forces of the Babylonians and Lydians, took Sardis, with Crœsus and all his wealth, spared his life, after he was at the stake, restored to him his family and his household, received him into the number of his counsellors and friends, and thus *prepared* the Lydians, over whom he reigned, and who were formerly combined with Babylon, for *coming up against it.*[6] He overthrew also the Phrygians and Cappadocians, and added their armies in like manner to his accumulating forces.[7] And by successive alliances and conquests, by proclaiming liberty to the slaves, by a humane policy, consummate skill, a pure and noble disinterested-

[1] Jackson (Dr. Thos.), Grotius, Poole, Prideaux, Lowth, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c. &c.
[2] Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. i. c. v. p. 53, ed. Hutch. Glasg. 1821.
[3] Jackson, Grotius, Poole, &c. &c.
[4] Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. iii. c. i. p. 156.
[5] Ibid. lib. iv. c. ii. pp. 215, 217.
[6] Ibid lib. v. c. ii. pp. 408—416.
[7] Ibid. lib. vii. c. iv. pp. 427, 428.

ness, and a boundless generosity, he changed, within the space of twenty years, a confederacy which the king of Babylon had raised up against the Medes and Persians, whose junction he feared, into a confederacy even of the same nations, against Babylon itself;—and thus *a standard was set up against Babylon in many a land, kingdoms were summoned, prepared, and gathered together against her; and an assembly of great nations from the north*,—including *Ararat and Minni*, or the greater and lesser Armenia, and *Aschenaz*, or according to Bochart, Phrygia,—*were raised up and caused to come against Babylon*. Without their aid, and before they were subjected to his authority, he had attempted in vain to conquer Babylon; but when he had *prepared* and *gathered them* together, it was taken, though by artifice more than by power.

They shall hold the bow and the lance—they shall ride upon horses—let the archer bend his bow—all ye that bend the bow shoot at her. They rode upon horses. Forty thousand Persian horsemen were armed from among the nations which Cyrus subdued; many horses of the captives were besides distributed among all the allies. And Cyrus came up against Babylon with a great multitude of horses;[1] and also with a great multitude of archers and javelin-men,[2] *that held the bow and the lance.*

No sooner had Cyrus reached Babylon, with the nations which he had prepared, and gathered against her, than in the hope of discovering some point not utterly impregnable, accompanied by his chief officers and friends he rode around the walls, and examined them on every side, after having for that purpose stationed his whole army *round* the city.[3] *They camped against it round about. They put themselves in array against Babylon round about.*

Frustrated in the attempt to discover, throughout the whole circumference, a single assailable point, and find-

[1] Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. vii. c. iv. p. 428.
[2] Ibid. p. 429. [3] Ibid. c. v.

ing that it was not possible, by any attack, to make himself master of walls so strong and so high, and fearing that his army would be exposed to the assault of the Babylonians by a too extended and consequently weakened line; Cyrus, standing in the middle of his army, gave orders that the heavy armed men should move, in opposite directions, from each extremity towards the centre; and the horse and light armed men being nearer and advancing first, and the phalanx being doubled and closed up, the bravest troops thus occupied alike the front and the rear, and the less effective were stationed in the middle.[1] Such a disposition of the army, in the estimation of Xenophon, himself a most skilful general, was well adapted both for fighting and preventing flight; while the Christian, judging differently of their successive movements, may here see the fulfilment of one prediction after another. For, as in this manner "they stood facing the walls," in regular order, and not as a disorderly and undisciplined host, though composed of various nations, *they set themselves in array against Babylon, every man put in array.*

A trench was dug round the city; towers were erected; Babylon was besieged; the army was divided into twelve parts, that each, monthly by turn, might keep watch throughout the year;[2] and though the orders were given by Cyrus, the command of the Lord of hosts was unconsciously obeyed—*let none thereof escape.*

The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight. They have remained in their holds; their might hath failed, they became as women.[3] Babylon had been the hammer of the whole earth, by which nations were broken in pieces, and kingdoms destroyed. Its mighty men carried the terror of their arms to distant regions, and led nations captive. But they were *dismayed* according to the word of the God of Israel, whenever the nations which he had stirred up against them stood in array before their walls. Their timidity, so clearly predicted,

[1] Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. vii. c. iv. 430. [2] Ibid. pp. 430—434.
[3] See Prideaux, Lowth, Bishop Newton, &c.

was the express complaint and accusation of their enemies, who in vain attempted to provoke them to the contest. Cyrus challenged their monarch to single combat, but also in vain;[1] for *the hands of the king of Babylon waxed feeble.* Courage had departed from both prince and people; and none attempted to save their country from spoliation, or to chase the assailants from their gates. They sallied not forth against the invaders and besiegers, nor did they attempt to disjoin and disperse them, even when drawn all around their walls, and comparatively weak along the extended line. Every gate was still shut; and *they remained in their holds.* Being as unable to rouse their courage, even by a close blockade, and to bring them to the field, as to scale or break down any portion of their stupendous walls, or to force their gates of solid brass, Cyrus reasoned that the greater their number, the more easily would they be starved into surrender, and yield to famine, since they would not contend with arms nor come forth to fight. And hence arose for the space of two years his only hope of eventual success. So dispirited became its people, that Babylon, which had made the world as a wilderness, was long unresistingly a beleaguered town. But, possessed of many fertile fields, and of provisions for twenty years, which in their timid caution they had plentifully stored, they derided Cyrus from their impregnable walls within which they *remained.*[2] Their profligacy, their wickedness and false confidence were unabated; they continued to live carelessly in pleasures, but their might did not return; and Babylon the great, unlike to many a small fortress and unwalled town, made not one effort to regain its freedom or to be rid of the foe.

Much time having been lost, and no progress having been made in the siege, the anxiety of Cyrus was strongly excited, and he was reduced to great perplexity, when at last it was suggested and immediately determined on, to turn the course of the Euphrates. But the task was

[1] Xen. Cyrop. lib. v. c. iii. p. 290.

[2] Xenoph. Cyrop. l. vii. c. v. p. 434; Herod. l. i. c. cxc.

not an easy one. The river was a quarter of a mile broad, and twelve feet deep, and, in the opinion of one of the counsellors of Cyrus, the city was stronger by the river than by its walls. Diligent and laborious preparation was made for the execution of the scheme, yet so as to deceive the Babylonians. And the great trench, ostensibly formed for the purpose of blockade, which for the time it effectually secured, was dug around the walls on every side, in order to drain the Euphrates, and to leave its channel a straight passage into the city, through the midst of which it flowed. When all things were in readiness for the execution of his design, Cyrus, having formed his army into two great divisions, stationed them respectively where the river entered, and where it emerged from the city, and hasted with the ineffective part of his troops to the lake which the queen of Babylon had made, and suddenly diverted the course of the Euphrates. So soon as the water ceased to flow into its wonted channel, Cyrus having returned to his army, commanded those about him to descend into the dry part of the river,[1] to ascertain if a passage could be effected; and on their reporting its practicability, the order was given to the vast besieging army to pass by the bed of the river as a road into the city. "*I will dry up thy sea, and make the springs dry. Thus saith the Lord,—that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers. A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up.*"[2]

Each command of Cyrus, and each act of his army, as related by Herodotus and Xenophon, show how the pleasure of the Lord and his purpose against Babylon were performed.

The father of history expresses a doubt whether the device, by which a way, unimpeded by the impregnable walls, was opened into Babylon, was the invention of

[1] Εις το ξηρον του ποταμου, Xen. vii. 5, p. 435. Τους ποταμους σου ξηρανω. Septuagint translation.

[2] See Grotius, Jackson, Prideaux, Lowth, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

Cyrus, or the suggestion of another. But there is not a doubt in history that then, as at a future period, *a snare was laid for Babylon.*[1]

The execution of an enterprise so hazardous, demanded the greatest circumspection and regularity of movement. And Cyrus gave orders to each Persian captain of a thousand men, cavalry as well as infantry, to be at his post and in his own presence, at the head of his soldiers, ranged two and two, to be followed by the allies in their wonted order.[2] And thus watching their time and preserving their ranks, they marched into the city, every man in the order previously prescribed. That men should have rode in hostile array against such a city as Babylon, begirt with stupendous walls, except where a deep river passed between them, is not the least wonder of the siege. But Cyrus, with his many thousands of horsemen, and Alexander afterwards with his band of Greeks, were both the servants of the Lord in accomplishing the prediction. *They shall ride upon horses, every man put in array, like a man to the battle against thee, O daughter of Babylon.*

While hosts of enemies thus stole into Babylon, like a thief into a house by stratagem and at night, no situation, for the moment, could have been more critical and dangerous than theirs: for if the design had been discovered, and if the gates leading from the river to the city had been shut, they would have been shut up as in a net, as Herodotus relates,[3] and their destruction would have been seemingly inevitable; and, but for the word that never errs, and the eye that watches over all, the assailants would have been the victims. But the Babylonians, given up on that night to intemperance in honour of their god, exercised no caution as they felt no fear, and the enemy passed into the city without obstruction or opposition; for, though they knew it not, the prophecy was true, *the gates shall not be shut.*

[1] See Grotius, Jackson, Prideaux, Lowth, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

[2] Xen. vii. 5, p. 435. [3] Herod. lib. i. c. cxci. Jackson, &c.

To encourage his troops to pass fearlessly through the streets, and to cast off the dread of being assailed with darts from the roofs of the houses, Cyrus previously announced that the doors were of palm-wood, covered with bitumen, and would easily be set on fire by the torches and inflammable matter with which, for that intent, they were plentifully supplied.[1] *They have burnt her dwelling-places; her bars are broken.* To which it is added,

One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end; and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted. The king was in the city, and yet had to be told that it was taken. The seeming enigma, that messengers should run in different and opposite directions, to convey to the same place tidings of the same event, is expounded by the fact of the nearly simultaneous entrance of the enemy at both ends of Babylon, between which the space of at least eight miles intervened. In attempting to bear with all expedition the disastrous tidings to the king in his palace, situated near the centre of the city, messengers from each *end* would thus necessarily so *run* as to *meet* each *other*, unconscious that the same message was alike borne by both, and that their speed would be in vain. The proof is not here the less striking because it is inferential; for it may well be presumed that such *messengers* did *run*, and that the numerous torches of the invading host were not borne in vain.

The river, from its great breadth and depth, and its sides being walled and strongly fortified, was held to be a defence of the city, rivalling, if not surpassing, that of the walls. And the city was taken, not only in a manner most unexpected, but at a time when the Babylonians were the most unprepared, and all sobriety and vigilance set aside. Herodotus relates, on the testimony of the inhabitants, that from the great extent of the city,

[1] Xen. vii. 5, p. 436.

and its being taken at the time of a feast, while the people were given up to dancing and indulgence, those who lived in the utmost parts of the city were in the hands of their enemies before those who dwelt in the centre were aware of the fact.[1] And though it may seem incredible that, as Aristotle relates, the tidings were unknown in some places within the walls on the third day; yet such a statement from such a pen adds to the proof of the predicted fact. There was no alarm from without; nor even the appearance of a foe. Not a gate of the city wall was opened; not a brick of it had fallen. But, as a snare had been laid for Babylon, so also *it was taken, and it was not aware;*[2] *it was found and also caught, for it had sinned against the Lord. How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; and thy wisdom, and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; therefore shall evil come upon thee, and thou shalt not know from whence it ariseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee, and thou shalt not be able to put it off*, &c.—*None shall save thee.*

In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord. I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, &c. *I will make drunken her princes and her wise men; her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep*, &c. Cyrus, having purposely chosen, for the execution of his plan, the time of a great annual Babylonish festival, stimulated his assembled troops to enter the city, because, in that night of general revel within the walls, many of them were asleep, many drunk, and confusion universally prevailed. On passing, without obstruction or hinderance, into the city, the Persians slaying some, putting others to flight, and joining with the revellers as if slaughter had been merriment, hastened by the shortest way to the palace, and reached it ere yet a messenger had told the king that the city was taken.

[1] Herod. lib. i. c. cxci. [2] Grotius, Jackson, Poole, &c.

The gates of the palace, which were strongly fortified, were shut. The guards stationed before them were *drinking* beside a blazing light, when the Persians rushed impetuously upon them. The louder and altered clamour, no longer joyous, caught the ear of the inmates of the palace, and the bright light showed them the work of destruction, without revealing its cause. And, *not aware* of the presence of an enemy in the midst of Babylon, the king himself, excited by the warlike tumults at the gates, commanded those within to examine from whence it arose; and according to the same word, by which the *gates* (leading from the river to the city) *were not shut, the loins of kings were loosed to* OPEN *before Cyrus the two-leaved gates.* At the first sight of the opened gates of the palace of Babylon, the eager Persians sprang in. *The king of Babylon heard the report of them—anguish took hold of him;* he and all who were about him perished: God had numbered his kingdom and finished it: it was divided and given to the Medes and Persians; the lives of the Babylonian princes, and lords, and rulers, and captains, closed with that night's festival: *the drunken slept a perpetual sleep, and did not wake.*[1]

Cyrus' brief address to his generals before marching into Babylon concluded, as recorded by Xenophon, in these remarkable words: "Go, seize your arms, and, together with the gods, I will lead you on (ἡγήσομαι). Do ye, said he, Gadatas and Gobryas, show us the ways, for ye know them; and, once entered, advance with the utmost expedition to the palace." The speed of the conqueror and of the avenger of blood outstripped that of the winged messenger of misfortune. Gobryas, formerly an injured vassal of the king of Babylon, pressed on with those about him, not without the hope that on such a night, while unguarded revelry reigned universally in the city, the gates of the palace, like those of the river, might be open. But though their hopes were vain, and the palace gates were shut, and a double wall surround-

[1] Herod. lib. i. c. cxci.; Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. v. pp. 434, 439.

ed it, yet the gates were opened, and when the palace was taken, and the king and his nobles slain, the castles were delivered up,[1] and Cyrus, in a single night, was master of Babylon. *I will go before them, and make the crooked places straight.*

To mask their purpose, the invading host mimicked the shouting as their leaders knew the customs of the intemperate and frantic crowd through whom they passed, or whom they slew. And it was from the warlike and tumultuous noise,[2] exceeding the obstreperous mirth of drunken soldiery, around the palace and at the very gates, that the two-leaved gates were opened. *Shout against her round about. Their voice shall roar* (literally sound, or make a tumultuous noise) *like the sea. The king of Babylon heard the report of them*, &c.

All her slain shall fall in the midst of her. The Babylonians would not go forth to fight. They mocked the enemy from their lofty walls, and defied danger from without, and dreaded it not within. In the siege, none of the Babylonians fell; but in the city, even in the *midst of it*, they were slain. There the palace was situated, and the guards were stationed, and in the very *midst of it* the soldiery of Babylon were massacred; the men of war were affrighted, and then, together with the king, his princes and lords were there *slain*.

She hath been proud against the Lord; against the Holy One of Israel; therefore her young men shall fall in THE STREETS, *and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day.* Cyrus sent troops of horse throughout *the streets*, with orders to slay all who were found there. And he commanded proclamation to be made, in the Syrian language, that all who were in the houses should remain within: and that, if any one were found abroad, he should be killed. These orders were obeyed.[3] *Every one that is found shall be thrust through*, &c. *They shall wander every man to his quarter.*

I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars. Not only did the Persian army enter with ease as caterpillars, to-

[1] Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. v. p. 440. [2] Ibid. p. 438. [3] Ibid. p. 439.

gether with all the nations that had come up against Babylon, but they seemed also as numerous. Cyrus, after the capture of the city, made a great display of his cavalry in the presence of the Babylonians, and in the midst of Babylon. Four thousand guards stood before the palace gates, and two thousand on each side. These advanced as Cyrus approached; two thousand spearmen followed them. These were succeeded by four square masses of Persian cavalry, each consisting of ten thou sand men; and to these again were added, in their order the Median, Armenian, Hyrcanian, Caducian, and Sacian horsemen,—*all* as before *riding upon horses, every man in array*,—with lines of chariots four abreast, concluding the train of the numerous hosts.[1] Cyrus afterwards reviewed, at Babylon, the whole of his army, consisting of one hundred and twenty thousand horse, two thousand chariots, and six hundred thousand foot.[2] Babylon, which was taken when not aware, and within whose walls no enemy, except a captive, had been ever seen, was also *filled with men as with caterpillars*, as if there had not been a wall around it. The Scriptures do not relate the manner in which Babylon was taken, nor do they ever allude to the exact fulfilment of the prophecies. But there is, in every particular, a strict coincidence between the predictions of the prophets and the historical narratives, both of Herodotus and Xenophon.

On taking Babylon suddenly and by surprise, Cyrus, as had been literally prophesied concerning him, and as the sign by which it was to be known that the Lord hath called him by his name, (Isa. xlv. 1—4[3]) became immediately possessed of the most secret treasures of Babylon.

[1] Xen. Cyr. lib. viii. c. iii. pp. 494, 495. [2] Ibid. c. vi. p. 532.

[3] Isaiah prophesied above one hundred and sixty years before the taking of Babylon, two hundred and fifty years before Herodotus, and nearly three hundred and fifty before Xenophon. See Bishop Newton.—Josephus states that this prophecy was delivered by Isaiah two hundred and ten years before the taking of Babylon—Isaiah prophesied, B. C. 760—798. Babylon was taken by Cyrus, B. C. 538. Herodotus was born about 484 B. C.—and Xenophon 349.

No enemy had ever dared to rise up against that great city. To take it seemed not a work for man to attempt; but it became the easy prey of him who was called *the servant of the Lord.* And as at this day,—from the perfect representation given by the prophets, of every feature of fallen Babylon, now at last utterly desolate,—men may know that God is the Lord, seeing that all who have visited and describe it, show that the predicted judgments against it have been literally fulfilled; so at that time, Cyrus—who, for two years, could only look on the outer side of the outer wall of Babylon, and who had begun to despair of reducing it by famine—was to know by the *treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places being given into his hand, that the Lord which had called him by his name, was the God of Israel.* And when the appointed time had come that the power of their oppressor was to be broken, Babylon was taken; and when the similarly prescribed period of the captivity of the Jews, for whose sake he was called, had expired, Cyrus was their deliverer.

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to SUBDUE NATIONS *before him.* Cyrus, commencing his career with a small army of Persians, not only succeeded to the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, first united under him, but the Hyrcanians yielded also voluntarily to his authority. He subdued the Syrians, Assyrians, Cappadocians, both Phrygias, the Lydians, Carians, Phœnicians, and Babylonians. He governed the Bactrians, Indians, and Cilicians, and also the Sacians, Paphlagonians and Mariandynians, and other nations. He likewise reduced to his authority the Greeks that were in Asia, and the Cyprians, and Egyptians.[1] *Nations* were thus *subdued before him.*

I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. He who was called the anointed of the Lord was free from covetousness. His character is drawn by Xenophon, (who states that he excelled all other kings,) as the

[1] Xen. Cyr. lib. i. pp. 4, 5.

model of a wise and generous prince. The liberality of Cyrus was more noble than the mere possession of immensity of wealth, though including both the riches of Crœsus and the treasures of Babylon. He reckoned that his riches belonged not any more to himself than to his friends.[1] And he made as well as pronounced it his object to use and not to hoard his wealth, and to apply it to the reward of his servants, and in relief of their wants. So *little* did he *regard silver* or *delight in gold*, that Crœsus told him that by his liberality he would make himself poor, instead of storing up vast treasures to himself. The Medes possessed, in this respect, the spirit of their chief, of which an instance, recorded by Xenophon, is too striking and appropriate to be passed over.[2] When Gobryas, an Assyrian governor, whose son the king of Babylon had slain, hospitably entertained him and his army, Cyrus appealed to the chiefs of the Medes and Hyrcanians, and to the noblest and most honourable of the Persians, whether giving first what was due unto the gods, and leaving to the rest of the army their portion, they would not overmatch his generosity by ceding to him their whole share of the first and plentiful booty which they had won from the land of Babylon. Loudly applauding the proposal, they immediately and unanimously consented; and one of them said, "Gobryas may have thought us poor, because we came not loaded with golden coins,[3] and drink not out of golden cups; but by this he will know, that men can be generous even without gold."[4] *As for gold, they did not delight in it.*

Gobryas, it may be presumed, was stirred up and prepared, by gratitude on the one hand, as well as by revenge on the other, to go up against Babylon. And, it may be mentioned, he was afterwards the first to lead the way to the palace; and—for, though a great deep, the judgments of God are altogether righteous—his hand was among those who slew the murderer of his son.

While such abundant illustrations of the truth of pro-

[1] Xen. Cyr. lib. viii. c. iv. p. 516.
[2] Ib. lib. viii. c. ii. p. 482.
[3] Darics.
[4] Xen. lib. v. p. 289.

phecy in respect to the siege of Babylon are before us, it may be specially noted, that there is not any other king or conqueror in ancient history, or even in Christian times, whose character, in the union of a noble disinterestedness and nobler self-denial, and of a sound because moral policy, and of an integrity which casts the conduct of many others into the shade, and of forbearance and generosity towards conquered enemies, the Babylonians excepted, ever surpassed or equalled that of Cyrus, as drawn or described by profane historians. By some it has indeed been deemed, we think unjustly, as in part a fiction, even because of its very excellence. But the description is given by a heathen, which tallies so closely with the word of the prophet. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, and I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways.*[1]

And it is immediately added by the prophet—*he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.*[2] And assuredly he was the man who first set forth the decree for the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of the temple. And far from acting thus, either for price or reward, he commanded the generals and governors in the vicinity of Judea, to supply the Jews with gold and silver, for the building of the temple, and beasts for sacrifice, which accordingly they did.[3]

Previous to the siege of Babylon, and in preparing the nations against her, Cyrus, after a desperate conflict, subdued the Egyptians, and the other confederates of Crœsus.[4] The Egyptians, though the most valiant and unyielding of his foes, on being reduced under his power, remained afterwards faithful to the king.[5] Ethiopia was, on the south, the boundary of his dominions.[6] *Thus saith the Lord, the labour of Egypt and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall*

[1] Isa. xlv. 1, 13.
[2] Isa. xlv. 13.
[3] Jos. Ant. lib. xi. c. i. § 2, 3.
[4] Xen. Cyr. lib. i. c. ii. p. 5.
[5] Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. i. p. 407.
[6] Xen. Cyr. lib. viii. c. viii. p. 545.

come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come over after thee.

They shall fall down unto thee. In his magnificent procession after the conquest of Babylon, where Cyrus first publicly presented himself before his army drawn up in array in the midst of assembled multitudes, so soon as, standing erect in his chariot, he came forth from the gate of the palace, all seeing, adored, or fell down unto him.[1] It was an ancient opinion, that Cyrus was the first man to whom adoration was thus paid: and that the eastern mode of prostration or falling down unto monarchs, especially among the Medes and Persians, had hence its origin.[2] This opinion, whether true or false, may at least testify to the fact, that the adoration paid to Cyrus was both remarkable and memorable.

And they shall make supplication to him. Not even adoration, unmeet for man, could disturb the equanimity of Cyrus; but his clemency and condescension shone brighter than his diadem. Released from the yoke of the king of Babylon, who, proud as Lucifer, neither listened to the cry of the oppressed, nor opened the door of his prisoners, very many, according to their various wants, petitioned Cyrus as he passed in his triumphal course through the admiring crowds. So numerous were the petitions addressed to him, that unable to hear them, and tempering mercy with judgment, and generosity with justice, he commanded three sceptre-bearers on each side, to tell them to make their requests known to him through his generals or friends, whom also he required to lay before him every case worthy of a hearing.

Such was the first conquest; such the first conqueror of Babylon; and such the prophetic history of both.

NONE SHALL RETURN IN VAIN. The walls of Babylon were incomparably the loftiest and the strongest ever

[1] Ἰδοντες δε παντες προσεκυνησαν. Xen. Cyr. lib. viii. c. iii. p. 494. The same Greek word, descriptive of the act, and coupled with the name of Cyrus, is used also by Arrian, and also in the Septuagint or Greek translation of this very verse.

[2] Arrian. de Exp. Alex. lib. iv. c. xi.

built by man. They were constructed of such stupendous size and strength, on very purpose that no possibility might exist of Babylon ever being taken. And, if ever confidence in bulwarks could not have been misplaced, it was when the citizens and soldiery of Babylon, who feared to encounter their enemies in the field,—in perfect assurance of their safety, and beyond the reach of the Parthian arrow, scoffed, from the summit of their impregnable walls, the hosts which encompassed them. But though the proud boast of a city so defended, and which had never been taken,—that it would *stand for ever*,—seemed scarcely presumptuous; yet, subsequently to the delivery of the prophecies concerning it, Babylon was not only repeatedly taken, but was never once besieged in vain. Cyrus indeed departed, after he first appeared before its walls, but he went to *prepare and gather together the nations against it.* And he did *not return in vain.* But this prediction, as it is applicable also to all others, is true, not of him only, but also of all who, in after ages, came up against Babylon. It fell before every hand that was raised against it. Yet its greatness did not depart, nor was its glory obscured in a day. Cyrus was not its destroyer; but he sought by wise institutions to perpetuate its pre-eminence among the nations. He left it to his successor in all its strength and magnificence. Rebelling against Darius, the Babylonians made preparations for a siege, and bade defiance to the whole power of the Persian empire. Fully resolved not to yield, and that famine might never reduce them to submission, they adopted the most desperate and barbarous resolution of putting every woman in the city to death, with the exception of their mothers, and one female, the best beloved in every family, to bake their bread. All the rest were *assembled together*, and strangled.[1] *These two things shall come upon thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the mul-*

[1] Herod. lib. iii. c. cl. tom. iii. 160, edit. Foul. See Prideaux, Bishop Newton.

titude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, &c. They did come upon them in their perfection, when their wives and children were strangled by their own hands; and so suddenly, as before, *in a moment in one day, did these things come upon them*, that the victims were assembled for the sacrifice; so general was the instant *widowhood*, that fifty thousand women were afterwards taken, in proportionate numbers, from the different neighbouring provinces of the empire, to replace those who had been slain; and the very reservation of their mothers multiplied the lamentations for the *loss of children*. But *trust in their wickedness* brought them no safety. For, while they were thus instrumental in the infliction of one grievous judgment, for which such murderers were ripe, their iniquity was not thereby lessened; and therefore, at however great a price, they procured not any security against another judgment, which also had been denounced against Babylon for its wickedness. They deemed themselves absolutely secure against famine and against assault. The artifice of Cyrus could not again be a snare; and an attempt to renew it was, along with every other, entirely frustrated. But still it was *not in vain* that Darius besieged Babylon.

In the twentieth month of the siege a single Persian, whose body was covered over with the marks of stripes and with blood, and whose nose and ears had been newly cut off, presented himself at one of the gates of Babylon,—a helpless object of pity, and, if not a great criminal indeed, the obvious victim of wanton and savage cruelty. He had fled, or escaped, from the camp of the enemy. But he was not a common deserter, such as they might not have admitted within their walls, but it was Zopyrus, who was well known as one of the chief nobles of Persia. He represented to the Babylonians, that, not for any crime, but for the honest advice which he had given to Darius to raise the siege, as the taking of the city seemed to all impossible, the enraged tyrant (his pride wounded, or his fears perhaps awakened,

that his army would be discouraged by such counsel) had inflicted upon him the severest cruelties, caused him to be mutilated as they saw, and to be scourged, of which his whole body bore the marks;—to one of his proud spirit and high rank, disgrace was worse than suffering, and he came to join the revolters, his soul burning for vengeance against their common tyrant. "And now," addressing them, he said, "I come for the greatest good to you, for the greatest evil to Darius, to his army, and to the Persians. The injuries which I have suffered shall not be unrevenged, for I know, and will disclose all his designs."

On such proofs, and cheered by such hopes, the Babylonians did not doubt the sincerity of Zopyrus nor his devotion to their cause, identified, as it clearly seemed, with the only hope of revenge against the cruel author of his wrongs, towards whom they could not conceive but that he would cherish an inflexible hatred. He sought but to fight against their enemies. At his request, they gladly and unhesitatingly intrusted him with a military command. Forgiveness of injuries was not then reckoned a virtue, which it is too seldom practically accounted even in a Christian land; and vengeance, still called honour, sleeps not in an unforgiving breast. Zopyrus soon satisfied the Babylonians that his wrongs would not long be unavenged. To their delight, having watched the first opportunity, he sallied forth from the gates of Semiramis, on the tenth day after his entrance into the city, and falling suddenly on a thousand of the enemy, slew them every one. After an interval of only seven days, twice that number were, in like manner, slain, near the Ninian gates. The men of Babylon were animated with new vigour and new hopes; the praise of Zopyrus was on every tongue. He received a higher command. But the Persians, seemingly more wary, were nowhere open to attack for the space of twenty days. On the expiration of that period, however, Zopyrus, by a noted exploit, again proved himself worthy of still greater authority, by leading out his

troops from the Chaldean gates, and killing, in one spot, four thousand men. In reward for such services, and such tried fidelity, skill, and courage, as none, they thought, could be more worthy of the honour and of the trust, they not only raised him to the chief command of their army, but appointed him to the dignified and most responsible office in Babylon, which it was his aim to attain, that of (τειχοφυλαξ) guardian of their walls.[1]

Darius, as if to be secure against the continued repetition of such desultory carnage of his troops, advanced with all his army to the walls. They were manned to repel the assault. But the treachery of Zopyrus, however incredible, and unknown and unsuspected, alike by the Babylonians and the Persians, became immediately apparent. Intrusted as he was, in virtue of his office, with the gates of the city, no sooner had the enemy approached, and the armed citizens ascended the walls, than he opened the Belidian and the Cissian gates, close to which the choicest Persian troops were stationed.[2] The whole scheme was a preconcerted *snare*, known only to Darius and Zopyrus, and invented solely by the latter, the mutilation of whose body was his own voluntary act. To the glory of the deed were added the greatest gifts and honours, and the governorship of Babylon without tribute, for his reward. The numbers of the different detachments of the Persian troops who fell, their positions, and the precise time of their successive advancements, had all been resolved on and arranged. And Darius as freely sacrificed the lives of seven thousand men, as Zopyrus had inflicted incurable wounds upon himself. "Thus," says Herodotus, "was Babylon a second time taken." And thus was the word of God—from whom nothing past, present, or future, can be hid—a second time fulfilled against Babylon—*none shall return in vain.*

Babylon was a third time taken by Alexander the Great. Mazæus, the Persian general, surrendered the city into his hands, and he entered it with his army

[1] Herod. c. clii.—clvii. pp. 166—173. [2] Herod. c. clviii. clix.

drawn up, "as if they were marching to battle."[1] Again was it *filled with men*, and literally was every man *put in array, like a man to the battle.* The siege of so fortified a city[2] would have been a work of great difficulty and labour, even to the conqueror of Asia. But the inhabitants eagerly flocked upon the walls to see their new king, and exchanged, without a struggle, the Persian for the Macedonian yoke. Babylon was afterwards successively taken by Antigonus, by Demetrius, by Antiochus the Great, and by the Parthians. But whatever king or nation came up against it, NONE *returned in vain.*

Each step in the progress of the decline of Babylon was the accomplishment of a prophecy. Conquered, for the first time,[3] by Cyrus, it was afterwards reduced from an imperial to a tributary city. *Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans.*— After the Babylonians rebelled against Darius, the walls were reduced in height, and all the gates destroyed.[4] *The wall of Babylon shall fall, her walls thrown down.*— Xerxes, after his ignominious retreat from Greece, rifled the temples of Babylon,[5] the golden images alone in which were estimated at 20,000,000*l.*, besides treasures of vast amount. *I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he has swallowed up; I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon.*[6]—Alexander the Great attempted to restore it to its former glory, and designed to make it the metropolis of a universal empire. But while the building of the temple of Belus and the reparation of the embankments of the Euphrates were actually carrying on, the conqueror of the world died, at the commencement

[1] Quadrato agmine, quod ipse ducebat, *velut in aciem irent*, ingredi suos jubet. (Quint. Curt. lib. v. c. ii.)

[2] Tam munitæ urbis. (Ibid.)

[3] Herod. lib. i. c. cxci. Lowth, Bishop Newton.

[4] Herod. lib. iii. c. cl. Calmet, &c.

[5] Herod. lib. i. c. clxxxiii. Arrian. de Expeditione Alex. lib. vii. c. xvii. Prideaux, Lowth, Bishop Newton.

[6] Jer. li. 44, 47, 52.

of this his last undertaking, in the height of his power, and in the flower of his age.[1] *Take balm for her pain, if so be that she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.*[2]—Patrocles, the governor of Babylon under Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander, alarmed at the sudden and unexpected tidings, that his enemy, Demetrius, with an army, was at hand, dared not, from the small number of his forces, wait his approach, ordered the Babylonians to leave the city and to "flee into the desert,"[3] and, abandoning the city, sought protection for himself and for his troops from the marshes of the Euphrates rather than the walls of Babylon. On entering Babylon, though he had come up suddenly like the swelling of a river, Demetrius found "a deserted city."[4] *He shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong; but I will make them suddenly run away from her.*[5]

Babylon was soon resorted to again, but the vicinity of the city of Seleucia, built on very purpose, as Pliny records,[6] and as Christian writers have long remarked, tended greatly to its abandonment and decay, and was the chief cause of the decline of Babylon as a city, and drained it of a great part of its population. Ptolemy Euergetes, who extended his conquests beyond the Euphrates, carried with him into Egypt 2500 idols, some of which Cambyses, who reigned at Babylon, had long before taken from the Egyptians.[7] At a later period, or 130 years before the Christian era, Phraates, king of Parthia, as Justin relates, having marched against the Scythians, who had begun to lay waste his territories, delegated his authority to one Himerus, a favourite on account of the beauty of his youth or childhood, who, forgetful of his former (condition of) life, and of his

[1] Arrian. lib. vii. c. xvii.; Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 738. Rollin.
[2] Jer. li. 8, 9.
[3] Φυγεῖν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον.
[4] Βαβυλῶνα τὴν πολὶν ἐκλελειμμένην εὗρε. Diod. Sic. tom. viii. lib. xix. pp. 423, 424.
[5] Jer. l. 44.
[6] In solitudinem rediit exhausta vicinitati Seleuciæ, *ob id* conditæ a Nicatore. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. vi. c. 36.
[7] Hieron. Tom. v. p. 706, in Dan. xi. 8.

duty as deputy, grievously oppressed the Babylonians and other states.[1] Phraates was discomfited and slain by the Scythians, as was also his uncle and successor, Artabanus, soon after by the Thogarii; and his son Mithridates the Great immediately succeeded to the kingdom of Parthia. Diodorus Siculus, in seeming inadvertence, speaks of Euemerus or Humerus as king of Parthia; but mentions that he was an Hyrcanian by birth: and in a single passage or fragment, his description of the cruelties exercised by him against the Babylonians is rich in illustrations, and, conjoined with corroborative testimony, marks the continued progress of the prophetic judgments against Babylon. Exceeding in cruelty all known tyrants, as Diodorus relates, he omitted no sort of punishment; for having enslaved many of the Babylonians even for any cause whatever, he was wont to send them away with all their households into Media, having given orders that their effects, or rather that they themselves should be sold as spoil. He also set fire to the forum of Babylon, and to some of the temples, and destroyed the fairest part of the city.[2]

[1] Phraates cum adversus eos proficisceretur, ad tutelam regni reliquit Himerum quendam, pueritiæ sibi flore conciliatum; qui tyrannica crudelitate, oblitus et vitæ præteritæ, et vicarii officii, Babylonios, multasque alias civitates importune vexavit. Justin. lib. xlii. cap. 1.

[2] Ὅτι Εὐημερος ὁ των Παρθων βασιλευς, Ὑρκανιος ὢν το γενος, ὡμοτητι δὲ ὑπερβαλλων παντας τους μνημονευομενους τυραννους, ἐυκ ἐστιν ὁποιον τιμωριας γενος ἀπελιπε. Πολλους δε των Βαβυλωνιων και ἐπι ταις τυχουσαις αἰτιαις παντοιους ἐξανδραποδισαμενος εἰς την Μηδιαν ἐξεπεμψε προσταξας λαφυραγωγησαι* και της Βαβυλωνος την ἀγορὰν, και τινα των ἱερων, ἐνεπρησε, και το κρατιστον της πολεως διεφθειρε. Diod. Sic. vol. x. p. 128. Translated as above. The preceding passage of Diodorus is quoted by Usher and Bishop Newton, &c., as descriptive of the desolation of Babylon and of the cruelties exercised against the Babylonians, without any specific reference to any special prediction. In the common Latin translation, which alone they quote, there is no mention whatever, as in the *original*, of the fact, that commandment was given by the tyrant that their spoils should be sold, or that the

* Λαφυρα is a term which specially denotes the spoils taken from the *living*, as distinguished from σκυλα, or those of the dead. *Scap.* The compound word is otherwise used by Diodorus to denote that the *persons* of captives were sold *as spoil*, and thus implies that they were subjected to the lowest servitude and utmost spoliation.

There is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal, &c. This prophecy is thus interpreted by Grotius and Lowth, without any allusion to the actual fact of the servitude or slavery of the Babylonians—"Prepare yourselves for servile offices."[1] "From being mistress of kingdoms thou shalt become a mean slave; thy captives shall be set to grind, which was reckoned the lowest degree of drudgery, (see Exod. xi., Judges xvi. 21,) such was the *pistrinum*, or turning the mill among the Romans."[2] Himerus, the worst of tyrants, exercised every species of cruelty upon the Babylonians, and reduced many of them to actual slavery, and consequently to its meanest toils. *I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*[3]

In suddenly *running away from her* at the approach of Demetrius, some of the inhabitants of Babylon left the Euphrates and fled to the desert, others *passed over the Tigris* into Susiana; and the intervening *rivers* and ditches, or marshy ground, over which they had to pass in their hasty retreat, were the best protection of the band that accompanied Patrocles. After reducing many of the Babylonians to bondage, Himerus banished them from Babylon into Media, which lay beyond the *Tigris and Choaspes, and their tributary streams;* but first he

exiles, as spoil, should be set up for sale. But it is not unworthy of being noted; for Lowth, who does not refer to this testimony of Diodorus or to any similar facts whatever, thus gives the interpretation of the words of the prophecy, *Uncover thy locks, &c.* "Thy hair shall hang about thy ears, without being dressed up or adorned with a diadem; thou shalt *lose all thy finery and those ornaments* in which thou didst pride thyself, as marks of thy state; and the persons of the greatest quality shall be *despoiled of their gaiety, and* CARRIED CAPTIVES *in a mean and ragged condition.*" Such was the interpretation of an able commentator before the *fact* was applied to the prediction. And such is the confirmation which it receives, after the lapse of more than a century, from the words omitted by a translator, but which are to be found in the old as well as modern editions of Diodorus.

[1] Para te servilibus ministeriis. Grot. Isa. xlvii. 2.
[2] Lowth. Ibid.
[3] Isa. xiii. 11.

commanded that they should be sold; and the rich and gay apparel of the proud daughter of Babylon, ill suited to the wandering exiles, did not any longer befit their station or their toils. The mandates of those who at different times had been *appointed over her* were obeyed; but it had long before been written concerning the daughter of the Chaldeans, *uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers*, &c. *Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.*[1]

The temples of Babylon were rifled of their *idols* by Xerxes, the king of Persia, till the *weight* of these in gold amounted to 400,000 pounds. Ptolemy Euergetes having extended his conquests beyond the Euphrates, took with him from the conquered provinces, on his sudden recall and hasty return into Egypt, 2500 *idols*, some of which Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, who reigned at Babylon, had previously taken from the Egyptians. When Babylon was *exhausted* by Seleucia, 40 miles distant, and many of the Babylonians removed to that city; and also when many of them at a later period were commanded, together with all their households, (πανοικιους,) to depart to Media; it may be presumed that their household gods, though a hinderance rather than a help, thus formed, time after time, a portion of their household effects; and that when their temples were finally burned, many of the *idols* were carried away by the idolatrous Babylonians, condemned to perpetual slavery and banishment, in their weary pilgrimage to the far distant land of their enemies. And thus it was written: *Their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle, your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop; they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden;*

But themselves are gone into captivity.[2] Media, from the first, was called to besiege Babylon; for the device of the Lord was against Babylon to destroy it. And in

[1] Isa. xlvii. 2, 3, 7. [2] Isa. xlvi. 1, 2.

the latter end, 308 years after the siege, and 582 years after the date of the prophecy, the enslaved Babylonians did go to Media *into captivity*.

Himerus, an Hyrcanian by birth, was but a youth, if not a boy, the floridness of whose *juvenile* looks (flore *pueritiæ*) was, together with the casual absence of the king, the cause of his sudden elevation to that power which, forgetful of his former state, he so greatly abused, as to excel all tyrants in cruelty. And while the full measure of his severities, of which none were omitted, was the cup of indignation prepared for the Babylonians, it may be said also of him: *Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.*[1] His youth, and elevation to power from such a cause, may mark him out as *the least of the flock;* and in fulfilling *the counsel that the Lord had taken against Babylon, surely he at once drew them out, and made their habitation desolate with them.*

He sent them forth from Babylon, together with all their households; many of the Babylonians had previously removed with all their effects to Seleucia; *They shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.*[2]

The temple of Belus, first built to bind the human race to the plains of Shinar, and the other temples of their gods, and many of their fine houses, while yet undemolished, may have long tended to keep the lingering Babylonians within the precincts of the devoted city. But the judgment of God rested on the most magnificent of their temples, as well as on the proud idolaters and their senseless idols: and the *soothsayers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators, could not stand up and save them from the things that were to come upon them;* and the time was come when the temples of the Babylonians could no longer be their trust or their resort, and when their efforts to save them or their habitations would be in vain. For it is expressly related that Himerus *set fire* to the forum and some of the temples, and destroyed the fairest part of the city: *Behold, they shall be as stub-*

[1] Jer. l. 45. [2] Jer. l. 3.

ble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame.[1] *The people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.*[2] *Bel boweth down; Nebo stoopeth; I will punish Bel in Babylon; and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him.*[3]

It is the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her: as she hath done, do unto her.[4]—*Wo unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation. The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple.—Recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her; for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel.*[5]—*I will render unto Babylon, and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea, all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord—The Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite.*[6] The facts relative to the siege of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews thus take the place of predictions; and a parallel may at length be drawn between what the Babylonians did, and what they suffered.

Bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon came up against Judah to destroy it.[7] And so soon as the *time of recompenses* began, an assembly of great nations, gathered together out of all the countries from Egypt to the bounds of the Caspian, and from Lydia to the Persian gulf, came up against Babylon.—*Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about, and the city was besieged.*[8] Cyrus, having prepared the nations against Babylon, encamped against it round about, built forts against it,[9] and laid siege to the city, which had long been the terror of the

[1] Isa. xl. 13, 14. [2] Jer. li. 58. [3] Jer. li. 44
[4] Jer. l. 15. [5] Jer. l. 27, 28, 29. [6] Jer. li. 24, 56.
[7] 2 Kings xxiv. 2. [8] 2 Kings xxv. 1, 2
[9] Xen. Cyr lib. vii. c. v. p. 433.

nations.—*The Chaldeans took Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and gave judgment upon him, and slew his sons* THE PRINCES OF JUDAH *before his face; and the captain of the Babylonish guard took the chief priest and the second priest, and the officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence, and the principal scribe, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore others, and brought them to the king of Babylon, and the king of Babylon smote them and slew them.*[1] And in the night in which Babylon was taken, the king, together with many of his nobles, was slain. Nor was the slaughter of the chief rulers of Israel left unavenged, when Darius, as Herodotus relates, impaled 3000 of the chief nobility of Babylon.[2]—*All the army of the Chaldeans brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about,*[3] and thus Darius brake down the wall of Babylon. —*Nebuchadnezzar carried the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon—and all the vessels, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon.*[4]—The treasures of the temple of Belus became the property of Cyrus; and Darius and Xerxes, devoted Magians or worshippers of fire, began and carried on against it the revenges of the temple of Jerusalem, till all its treasures were exhausted, and all its idols broken, and all that Bel had swallowed up was brought forth out of his mouth. *Nebuzaradan, a captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came unto Jerusalem, and he burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and* EVERY GREAT MAN'S HOUSE BURNED HE WITH FIRE.[5] Himerus, a deputy and servant of the king of Parthia, set fire to the forum and some of the temples of Babylon, and destroyed the best or fairest parts of the city.—*The people* (of Judah) *transgressed very much, they mocked the messengers of the Lord—therefore*

1 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7, 18—21.
2 Ὀδαρεις των ἀνδρων τους κορυφαιους μαλιστα ες τρισχιλιους ανεσκολοπισε.
3 2 Kings xxv. 10. 4 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. 5 2 Kings xxv. 8, 9.

he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, and he gave ALL *into his hands.*[1] The captive Jews *were servants to Nebuchadnezzar and his sons. The poorest only of the people of the land were left to be vine-dressers and husbandmen, and to serve the king of Babylon.* And when the conquerors became the conquered, Cyrus held *all the property and the persons* of the Babylonians, as given unto him.[2] Having taken Babylon, Cyrus commanded the Babylonians, on pain of death, to deliver up their arms; enacted that they should cultivate the land, and pay tribute, and serve those to whom they were respectively given, and he ordered the Persians, and their allies, to speak as masters or lords to those whom they had received.[3] Addressing his assembled chiefs, he maintained that all were theirs by right of conquest, as by an eternal law, and that they had entered into the possession of a large and fertile country, and of *a people to cultivate it for their use.* Successive rulers held them in the same dependent state, and revolt from oppression finally entailed a *servitude* as heavy and grievous as that which they had formerly exacted.—The Babylonians had made the Jews to *serve in a hard bondage, and showed them no mercy, but laid their yoke very heavily upon them.*[4] Cyrus reduced the Babylonians to the most abject state, to secure their submission.[5] Darius after their rebellion tyrannized over them more cruelly than before. The cruelties exercised by the idolaters against the worshippers of the God of Israel, were retaliated on themselves by the worshippers of fire, and enemies of idolatry. And while *no mercy was shown unto Israel*, Himerus, excelling all known tyrants in cruelties, exercised them all, and *omitted no sort of punishment*, or showed *no mercy* to the inhabitants of Babylon. Babylon, that led Judah captive, and *smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, and that ruled the nations in anger*, became the

[1] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, 16, 17.
[2] Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. c. v. pp. 440, 441.
[3] Ibid. pp. 452, 453.
[4] Isa. xiv. 3; Jer. xlvii. 6.
[5] Xen. Cyr. lib. vii. p. 451.

victim of the wrath it had provoked, and was smitten with a continual stroke, and long continued to be the threshing-floor of the nations, though 400 years had elapsed from its subjection to Cyrus till its enslaved citizens, in token of the vengeance of the temple of the Lord, went forth into captivity, dazzled and distressed by the blaze of the temples of Babylon.

The "golden city," which once triumphed over Jerusalem, thus gradually verged, for centuries, towards poverty and desolation. Notwithstanding that Cyrus resided chiefly at Babylon, and sought to reform the government and remodel the manners of the Babylonians, the succeeding kings of Persia preferred, as the seat of empire, Susa, Persepolis, or Ecbatana, situated in their *own country;* and in like manner the successors of Alexander did not attempt to complete his purpose of restoring Babylon to its pre-eminence and glory; but, after the subdivision of his mighty empire, the very kings of Assyria, during their temporary residence even in Chaldea, deserted Babylon, and dwelt in Seleucia. And thus the foreign inhabitants, first Persians, and afterwards Greeks, imitating their sovereigns by deserting Babylon, acted as if they verily had said,—*Forsake her, and let us go every man unto his own country; for her judgment is reached unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. Babylon shall be as a chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up; they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.*

Kindred judgments—the issue of common crimes—rested on the land of Chaldea, as well as on its doomed metropolis; and the tracing of their fulfilment may best lead to the view of the utter desolation of fallen Babylon.

They come from a far country, from the end of the earth, to destroy the whole land. Many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of thee also, &c. The Persians, the Macedonians, the Parthians, the Romans,

the Saracens, and the Turks, are the chief of the many nations who have unscrupulously and unsparingly served themselves of the land of the Chaldeans: and Cyrus and Darius, kings of Persia; Alexander the Great, and Seleucus, king of Assyria; Demetrius and Antiochus the Great; Trajan, Severus, Julian, and Heraclius, emperors of Rome; the victorious Omar, the successor of Mahomet; Holagou and Tamerlane, are *great kings*, who successively subdued or desolated Chaldea, or exacted from it tribute to such an extent, as scarcely any other country ever paid to a single conqueror. And, though the names of some of these nations were unknown to the Babylonians, and unheard of in the world at the time of the prophecy, most of these many nations and great kings need now but be named, to show that, in local relation to Chaldea, *They came from the utmost border, from the coasts of the earth.*

They are CRUEL *both in* ANGER *and fierce wrath to lay the land* DESOLATE, &c. The Persians vied with the Parthians in cruelty and fierceness against resisting and against subjugated enemies. Three thousand Babylonians were at once impaled by order of Darius. Conquest was the object, and kindness was not in the nature of the Macedonian conquerors of Babylon. The possession of Chaldea was contested between Antigonus and Seleucus, and *ruler rose against ruler.* After its long subjection to the Seleucidæ, the proverbially cruel Parthians held Babylonia in bondage. In the second century of the Christian era, the Romans, *coming from afar*, still maintained the character of the cruel and fierce desolators of Chaldea, and were thus the unconscious instruments of the fulfilment of other prophecies. "Under the reign of Marcus, the Roman generals penetrated *as far as* Ctesiphon and Seleucia. They were received as friends by the Greek colony; they attacked as enemies the seat of the Parthian kings, yet both cities experienced the same treatment. The sack and conflagration of Seleucia, *with the massacre of three hundred thousand of the inhabitants*, tarnished the glory of the Roman triumph

Seleucia sunk under the fatal blow; but Ctesiphon, in about thirty-three years, had sufficiently recovered its strength to maintain an obstinate siege against the emperor Severus."[1] Ctesiphon was thrice besieged and thrice taken by the predecessors of Julian. And when attacked by Julian, the *anger* of that Roman emperor and of his army was not moderated, nor their *cruelty* abated, by the effectual resistance of the citizens of Ctesiphon against sixty thousand besiegers. "The fields of Assyria were devoted by Julian to the calamities of war; and the philosopher retaliated on a guiltless people the acts of rapine and cruelty which had been committed by their haughty master in the Roman provinces; the Persians beheld from the walls of Ctesiphon *the desolation* of the adjacent country."[2] With such violence did he wreak his vengeance on the *inhabitants of Chaldea*, that their *fierce wrath* was conjoined with the *cruelty* of their enemies *to lay the land desolate.* "The extensive region that lies between the river Tigris and the mountains of Media, was filled with villages and towns; and the fertile soil, for the most part, was in a very improved state of cultivation.—But on the approach of the Romans, this rich and smiling prospect was instantly blasted. Wherever they moved, the inhabitants deserted the open villages, and took shelter in the fortified towns; the cattle were driven away; the grass and ripe corn were *consumed with* FIRE; and as soon as the *flames* had subsided which interrupted the march of Julian, he beheld the melancholy face of a SMOKING AND NAKED DESERT."[3] But "the second city of the province, large, populous, and well fortified," in vain resisted a fierce and desperate assault; and a large breach having been made by a battering-ram in the walls, "the soldiers of Julian rushed *impetuously* into the town, and after the full gratification of every military appetite, Perisabor was REDUCED TO ASHES; and the engines which assaulted

[1] Gibbon, vol. i. c. viii. p. 333.
[2] Ibid. vol. iv. c. xxiv. pp. 169, 185.
[3] Ibid. vol. iv. c. xxiv. pp. 191, 192.

the citadel were planted on the *ruins of the smoking houses.*"[1] When, in after ages, the Romans, under Heraclius, penetrated to the royal seat of Destagered, and spread over Chaldea to the gates of Ctesiphon, "whatever could not be easily transported, *they consumed with fire*, that Chosroes might feel the *anguish* of those wounds which he had so often inflicted on the provinces of the empire; and justice might allow the excuse," says Gibbon, "if the desolation had been confined to the works of regal luxury; if national *hatred*, military license, and religious zeal, had not wasted with *equal rage* the habitations and the temples of the guiltless subjects."[2] The fierce Abassides, proverbially reckless of committing murder, which was the very work that their missionaries went forth to execute, long reigned over Chaldea; and Bagdad, its new capital, distant about fifteen miles from Seleucia and Ctesiphon, was their imperial seat for five hundred years.[3] "Their daggers, their only arms, were broken by the sword of Holagou, and except the word *assassin*, *not a vestige is left of the enemies of mankind*;"[4] for again and again has it proved true of the land of Chaldea—*I will destroy the sinners thereof out of it.* The Mogul Tartars succeeded as the guilty possessors and cruel desolators of *the land* of Babylon. "Bagdad, after a siege of two months, was stormed and sacked by the Moguls, under Holagou Khan, the grandson of Ghengis Khan."[5] And Tamerlane, another *great king*, "reduced to his obedience the whole course of the Tigris and Euphrates, from the mouth to the sources of these rivers; and he erected on the ruins of Bagdad a pyramid of ninety thousand heads."[6] Finally, not with abated, but, if possible, with increasing, or with more persevering cruelty, the Turks, aided by Saracens, Kurds, and Tartars, have become

[1] Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxiv. p. 170.
[2] Ibid. vol. viii. c. xlvi. p. 253.
[3] Ibid. vol. x. c. lii. p. 35.
[4] Ibid. vol. xi. ch. lxiv. p. 417.
[5] Ibid. vol. xi. ch. lxiv. p. 418.
[6] Ibid. vol. xii. c. lxv. pp. 9—24.

the weapons of the indignation of the Lord, brought forth out of his armoury which he hath opened; for—fearful as a token of judgment, and clear as the testimony of truth —*this is the work of the Lord God of Hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.—Waste and utterly destroy after them. A sword is upon the Chaldeans. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. I will kindle a* FIRE *in his* CITIES, *and it shall* DEVOUR ALL ROUND ABOUT HIM. *A sound of great destruction cometh from the land of the Chaldeans.*

And Chaldea shall be a spoil; ALL *that spoil her shall be* SATISFIED, *saith the Lord. Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses. A* SWORD *is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed. O thou that dwellest upon many waters,* ABUNDANT *in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.* On taking Babylon suddenly and by surprise, Cyrus became immediately possessed of *the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places.* On his first publicly appearing in Babylon, all the officers of his army, both of the Persians and allies, according to his command, wore very splendid robes, those belonging to the superior officers being of various colours, all of the finest and brightest dye, and richly embroidered with gold and silver; and thus the *hidden riches of secret places* were openly displayed. And when the treasures of Babylon became the spoil of another great king, Alexander gave six *minæ* (about 15*l.*) to *each* Macedonian horseman, to each Macedonian soldier and foreign horseman two minæ (5*l.*,) and to every other man in his army, a donation equal to two months' pay. Demetrius ordered his soldiers to plunder the land of Babylon for *their own use.*[1] But it is not in these instances alone that Chaldea has been a spoil, and that *all* who spoil her have been *satisfied.* It was the abundance of her treasures which brought successive spoliators. Many nations came from afar, and though they *returned to their own country*, (as in formerly besieging Babylon, so in continuing to de-

[1] Plutarch, Life of Demetrius.

spoil the land of Chaldea,) *none returned in vain.* From the richness of the country new treasures were speedily stored up, till again *the sword came upon them, and they were robbed.* The prey of the Persians and of the Greeks for nearly two centuries after the death of Alexander, Chaldea became afterwards the prey chiefly of the Parthians, for an equal period, till a greater nation, the Romans, *came from the coasts of the earth* to pillage it. To be restrained from dominion and from plunder, was the exciting cause, and often the shameless plea, of the anger and fierce wrath of these famed but cruel conquerors of the world. Yet within the provinces of their empire, it was their practice, on the submission of the inhabitants, to protect and not to destroy. But Chaldea, from its extreme distance, never having yielded permanently to their yoke, and the limits of their empire having been fixed by Hadrian on the western side of the Euphrates, or on the very borders of Chaldea, that hapless country obtained not their protection, though repeatedly the scene of ruthless spoliation by the Romans. The authority of Gibbon, in elucidation of Scripture, cannot be here distrusted any more than that of heathen historians. To use his words, "a hundred thousand captives, and a *rich booty*, rewarded the fatigues of the Roman soldiers,"[1] when Ctesiphon was taken, in the second century, by the generals of Marcus. Even Julian, who, in the fourth century, was forced to raise the siege of Ctesiphon, came not in vain to Chaldea, and *failed not to take of it a spoil;* nor, though an apostate, did he fail to verify by his acts the truth which he denied. After having given Perisabor to the flames, "the plentiful magazines of corn, of arms, and of splendid furniture, were partly distributed among the troops, and partly reserved for the public service; the *useless stores* were destroyed by fire, or thrown into the streams of the Euphrates."[2] Having also rewarded his army with a hundred pieces of silver to each soldier, he thus stimulated

[1] Gibbon, vol. i. ch. viii. p. 334.
[2] Ibid. vol. iv. ch. xxiv. p. 171.

them (when still dissatisfied) to fight for greater spoil—"Riches are the object of your desires; those riches are in the hands of the Persians; and the *spoils* of this fruitful country are proposed as the prize of your valour and discipline."[1] The enemy being defeated after an arduous conflict, "the *spoil* was such as might be expected from the riches and luxury of an oriental camp; *large quantities of silver and gold*, splendid arms and trappings, and beds and tables of massy silver."[2]

When the Romans, under Heraclius, ravaged Chaldea, "though much of the treasure had been removed from Dastagered, and much had been expended, the *remaining wealth* appears to have *exceeded their hopes*, and even to have SATIATED their avarice."[3]

While the deeds of Julian and the words of Gibbon show how Chaldea was *spoiled*—how a *sword* continued to be on her *treasures*—and how, *year after year*, and age after age, there was *rumour on rumour*, and *violence in her land, and that all that spoil her would be* SATISFIED—more full illustrations remain to be given of the truth of the same prophetic word. And as a painter of great power may cope with another, by drawing as closely to the life as he, though the features be different, so Gibbon's description of the sack of Ctesiphon, as previously he had described the sack and conflagration of Seleucia, (cities, each of which may aptly be called "the daughter of Babylon," having been, like it, the capital of Chaldea,) is written as if, by the most graphic representation of facts, he had been aspiring to rival Volney as an illustrator of Scripture prophecy. "The capital was taken by assault; and the disorderly resistance of the people gave a keener edge to the *sabres* of the Moslems, who shouted with religious transport, 'This is the white palace of Chosroes; this is the promise of the apostle of God.' The naked *robbers* of the desert were suddenly *enriched beyond the measure of their hope* or knowledge. Each chamber revealed a new *treasure*, *secreted* with art,

[1] Gibbon, vol. iv. ch. xxiv. p. 176. [2] Ibid. vol. iv. c. xxiv. p. 184.
[3] Ibid. vol. viii. c. xlvi. p. 252.

or ostentatiously displayed; the *gold and silver*, the various wardrobes and precious furniture, surpassed (says Abulfeda) the estimate of fancy or numbers; and another historian defines the untold and almost infinite mass by the fabulous computation of three thousands of thousands of thousands of pieces of gold. One of the apartments of the palace was decorated with a carpet of silk sixty cubits in length, and as many in breadth, (90 feet;) a paradise, or garden, was depicted on the ground; the flowers, fruits, and shrubs were imitated by the figures of the *gold* embroidery, and the colours of the *precious stones;* and the ample square was encircled by a variegated and verdant border. The rigid Omar *divided the prize* among his brethren of Medina; the picture was destroyed; but such was the intrinsic value of the materials, that the share of Ali alone was sold for 20,000 drachms. A mule that carried away the tiara and cuirass, the belt and bracelets of Chosroes, was overtaken by the pursuers; the gorgeous trophy was presented to the commander of the faithful, and the gravest of the companions condescended to smile when they beheld the white beard, hairy arms, and uncouth figure of the veteran who was invested with the *spoil* of the *great king*."[1]

Recent evidence is not wanting to show, that, wherever a *treasure* is to be found, a sword, in the hand of a *fierce* enemy, is upon it, and spoliation has not ceased in the land of Chaldea.

"On the west of Hillah, there are two towns, which, in the eyes of the Persians and all the Shiites, are rendered sacred by the memory of two of the greatest martyrs of that sect. These are Meshed Ali and Meshed Housein, lately *filled with riches*, accumulated by the devotion of the Persians, but carried off by the *ferocious* Wahabees to the middle of their deserts."[2]

And, after the incessant spoliation of ages, now that

[1] Gibbon, vol. ix. ch. li. pp. 370, 371.

[2] Malte-Brun's Geog. vol. ii. p. 119; Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 246.

the end is come of the treasures of Chaldea, the earth itself fails not to disclose its *hidden treasures*, so as to testify that they once were *abundant*. In proof of this an instance may be given. At the ruins of Hoomania, near to those of Ctesiphon, pieces of silver having (on the 5th of March, 1812) been accidentally discovered, edging out of the bank of the Tigris, "on examination, there were found and brought away," by persons sent for that purpose by the pasha of Bagdad's officers, "between six and seven hundred ingots of silver, each measuring from one to one and a half feet in length; and an earthen jar, containing upwards of two thousand Athenian coins, all of silver. Many were purchased at the time by the late Mr. Rich, formerly the East India Company's resident at Bagdad, and are now in his valuable collection, since bought by government, and deposited in the British Museum."[1] Amidst the ruins of Ctesiphon, "the natives often pick up coins of gold, silver, and copper, for which they always find a ready sale in Bagdad. Indeed, some of the wealthy Turks and Armenians, who are collecting for several French and German consuls, hire people to go and search for coins, medals, and antique gems; and I am assured they never return to their employers empty-handed;"[2]—as if *all who spoil Chaldea shall be satisfied*, till even the ruins be spoiled unto the uttermost.

The past history of the land of the Chaldeans may be briefly closed in the language of prophecy; for the prophets, in their visions, saw it as it is; although historians knew not, even after its grandeur was partially gone, how to tell of its fertility, which they witnessed, and hope to be believed. Those who recorded *the word that the Lord spake against Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans*, had no such fear, though two thousand four hundred years have elapsed since they described what is now only at last to be seen.

I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations: cut off the sower from Babylon,

[1] Captain Mignan's Travels, p. 53. [2] Ibid. p. 74.

and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest. A drought is on the waters, and they shall be dried up. Behold the hindermost of the nations, a dry land and a desert. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land where no man dwelleth, neither doth son of man pass thereby. I will send unto Babylon fanners that shall fan her, and empty her land. The land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

The land of the Chaldeans was to be made *perpetual* or long-continued *desolations*. Ravaged and spoiled for ages, the Chaldees' excellency finally disappeared, and the land became desolate, as still it remains. Rauwolff, who passed through it in 1574, describes the country as bare, and "so dry and barren that it cannot be tilled."[1] And the most recent travellers all concur in describing it in similar terms.

The land of Babylon was to be fanned and emptied—to be a dry land, a wilderness, and a desert, &c.—On the one side, near to the site of Opis, "the country all around appears to be one wide desert of sandy and barren soil, thinly scattered over with brushwood and tufts of reedy grass"[2] On the other, between Bussorah and Bagdad, "immediately on either bank of the Tigris, is the *untrodden desert*. The absence of all cultivation,—the sterile, arid, and wild character of the whole scene, formed a contrast to the rich and delightful accounts delineated in Scripture. The natives, in travelling over these *pathless deserts*, are compelled to explore their way by the stars."[3] "The face of the country is open and flat, presenting to the eye one vast level plain, where nothing is to be seen but here and there a herd of half-wild camels. This immense tract is very rarely diversified with any trees of moderate growth, but is an im-

[1] Rauwolff's Travels, in Ray's Collection of Travels, 1693, p. 164.
[2] Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 155.
[3] Mignan's Travels, p. 5.

mense wild bounded only by the horizon."[1] In the intermediate region, "the whole extent from the foot of the wall of Bagdad is a barren waste, without a blade of vegetation of any description;" on leaving the gates, the traveller has before him "the prospect of a bare *desert*, a flat and barren country. . . . The whole country between Bagdad and Hillah is perfectly flat and (with the exception of a few spots as you approach the latter place) *uncultivated waste*."[2] "That it was at some former period in a far different state, is evident from the number of canals by which it is traversed, now *dry* and neglected; and the quantity of heaps of earth covered with fragments of brick and broken tiles, which are seen in every direction,—the indisputable traces of former population. At present the only inhabitants of the tract are the Sobeide Arabs."[3] "Around, as far as the eye can reach, is a *trackless desert*."[4] "The abundance of the country has vanished as clean away as if the 'besom of desolation' had swept it from north to south; the whole land, from the outskirts of Babylon to the farthest stretch of sight, lying a melancholy waste. *Not a habitable spot* appears for countless miles."[5] *The land of Babylon is desolate without an inhabitant.* The Arabs traverse it; and every man met with in the desert is looked on as an enemy. Wild beasts have now their home in the land of Chaldea; but the traveller is less afraid of them,—even of the lion,—than of "the wilder animal, the desert Arab." The country is frequently "totally impassable." "Those splendid accounts of the Babylonian lands, yielding crops of grain two or three hundredfold, compared with the modern face of the country, afford a remarkable proof of the *singular desolation* to which it

[1] Mignan's Travels, pp. 31, 32; Keppel's Nar. vol. i. p. 260; Buckingham's Travels, p. 242; Kinneir's Memoir of Persia, p. 279.

[2] Rich's Memoir, p. 4.

[3] Transactions of the Literary Society at Bombay, vol. i. pp. 123, 138; Captain Frederick on the State of Babylon.

[4] Keppel's Nar. p. 87.

[5] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels in Babylonia, &c., vol. ii. p. 285.

has been subjected. The canals at present can only be traced by their decayed banks."[1]

"The soil of this desert," says Captain Mignan, who traversed it on foot, and who, in a single day, crossed forty ancient water-courses, "consists of a hard clay, mixed with sand, which at noon becomes so heated with the sun's rays, that I found it too hot to walk over it with any degree of comfort. Those who have crossed those desert wilds, are already acquainted with their dreary tediousness even on horseback: what it is on foot they can easily imagine."[2]

Where astronomers first registered eclipses, and marked the motions of the planetary bodies, the natives, as in the deserts of Africa, or as the mariner without a compass on the pathless ocean, can now direct their course only by the stars, over the pathless desert of Chaldea. Where cultivation reached its utmost height, and where two hundredfold was stated as the common produce, there is now one wide and uncultivated waste; *and the sower and reaper are cut off from the land of Babylon.* Where abundant stores and treasures were laid up, and annually renewed and increased, *fanners* have *fanned*, and *spoilers* have *spoiled* them till they have *emptied* the land. Where labourers, shaded by palm-trees a hundred feet high, irrigated the fields till all was plentifully watered from numerous canals, the wanderer, without an object on which to fix his eye, but "stinted and short-lived shrubs," can scarcely set his foot without pain, after the noonday heat, on the "arid and parched ground," in plodding his weary way through *a desert, a dry land, and a wilderness.* Where there were crowded thoroughfares from city to city, there is now "silence and solitude;" for the ancient *cities* of Chaldea are *desolations,—where no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.*[3]

[1] Mignan's Travels, p. 2. [2] Ibid. pp. 2, 31—34.

[3] Sin has wrought desolation in Chaldea, as, finally, if unrepented of, it must in any and in every land. But justice shall yet dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness *remain* in the fruitful

Her cities are desolations. The course of the Tigris through Babylonia, instead of being adorned, as of old, with cities and towns, is marked with the sites of "ancient ruins."[1] Sitace, Sabata, Narisa, Fuchera, Sendia, "no longer exist."[2] A succession of longitudinal mounds, crossed at right angles by others, mark the supposed site of Artemita, or Destagered. Its once luxuriant gardens are covered with grass; and a higher mound distinguishes "the royal residence" from the ancient streets.[3] Extensive ridges and mounds (near to

field: and—not in Judea alone, on the restoration and conversion of all the house of Israel, but throughout all nations when enlightened by the word of God, and renewed by his Spirit, moved by whom the prophets spake,—the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. (Isa. xxxii. 15—17.) And it is pleasing to pause for a moment, and to turn from the direful retrospect of sin, judgment, and desolation, which the past history of Chaldea holds up to view, to a word of Scripture, (one word, if rightly interpreted, is enough,) which, like a bright star in the east, shines as the harbinger of a brighter day, after the long night of darkness which has rested on that land which was full of wickedness, and therefore has been *emptied* in judgment. And seemingly commencing convulsions, in the war and the trial of principles, throughout the wide world, that must come—the rising "hurricane" which, controlled by the Lord, shall yet sweep every moral "pestilence" from the earth, seem, in their beginning, to betoken that the time may not be distant, when the effect of the vision shall be seen. *Then said I to the angel that talked with me,* (Zechariah v. 10, 11,) *whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar; and it shall be established, and set there on its own base,*—in the *land* of Shinar, but it is not said, in the city of Babylon. Building, establishing, and setting, all appear to be significative of blessing—of reconstruction on a new base, and not reducible to *heaps:* and though the previous vision be of judgment, he whose name is THE BRANCH, is immediately after spoken of; and, in "building the temple of the Lord," his office is redemption. But, without a metaphor, it is said,—and, without a doubt, it shall prove true,—All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord. The whole earth shall rejoice,—the *wilderness* and the *solitary places* shall be glad for them; and the *desert* shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

[1] See Chart prefixed to Major Keppel's Narrative.

[2] Plan of the Environs of Babylon, &c., in Major Rennel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 335.

[3] Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 267.

Houmania,) varying in height and extent, are seen branching in every direction."[1] A wall, with sixteen bastions, is the only memorial of Apollonia.[2] The once magnificent Seleucia is now a scene of desolation. There is not a single building, but the country is strewed for miles with fragments of decayed buildings. "As far," says Major Keppel, "as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds; the whole of this place was a desert flat."[3] On the opposite bank of the Tigris, where Ctesiphon its rival stood, besides fragments of walls and broken masses of brick-work, and remains of vast structures encumbered with heaps of earth, there is one magnificent monument of antiquity, "in a remarkably perfect state of preservation," "a large and noble pile of building, the front of which presents to view a wall three hundred feet in length, adorned with four rows of arched recesses, with a central arch, in span eighty-six feet, and above an hundred feet high, supported by walls sixteen feet thick, and leading to a hall which extends to the depth of one hundred and fifty-six feet," the width of the building.[4] A great part of the back wall and of the roof is broken down; but that which remains "still appears much larger than Westminster Abbey."[5] It is supposed to have been the lofty palace of Chosroes; but there desolation now reigns. "On the site of Ctesiphon, the smallest insect under heaven would not find a single blade of grass wherein to hide itself, nor one drop of water to allay its thirst."[6] In the rear of the palace, and attached to it, are mounds two miles in circumference, indicating the utter desolation of buildings, formed to minister to luxury. But, in the words of Captain Mignan, "such is the extent of the irregular mounds and hillocks that overspread the sites of these renowned cities, that it would occupy some

[1] Mignan's Travels, p. 49.
[2] Keppel, p. 276.
[3] Keppel's Narrative, p. 125.
[4] Ibid. p. 130.
[5] Mignan's Travels, p. 79.
[6] Buckingham, p. 441.

months to take the bearings and dimensions of each with accuracy."[1]

While the ancient *cities of Chaldea* are thus *desolate*, the sites of others cannot be discovered, or have not been visited, as none pass thereby; the more modern cities, which flourished under the empire of the Califs, "are all in ruins."[2] The second Bagdad has not indeed yet shared the fate of the first. And Hillah—a town of comparatively modern date, near to the site of Babylon, but in the gardens of which there is not the least vestige of ruins—yet exists. But the former, "ransacked by massacre, devastation, and oppression, during several hundred years," has been "gradually reduced from being a rich and powerful city, to a state of comparative poverty, and the feeblest means of defence."[3] And of the inhabitants of the latter, about eight or ten thousand, it is said that if any thing could identify the modern inhabitants of Hillah as the descendants of the ancient Babylonians, it would be their extreme profligacy, for which they are notorious even amongst their immoral neighbours."[4] They give no sign of repentance and reformation to warrant the hope that judgment, so long continued upon others, will cease from them; or that they are the people that shall escape. Twenty years have not passed since towns in Chaldea have been ravaged and pillaged by the Wahabees; and so lately as 1823, the town of Shehreban "was sacked and ruined by the Kurds," and reduced to desolation.[5] Indications of ruined cities, whether of a remote or more recent period, abound throughout the land. The process of destruction is still completing. Gardens which studded the banks of the Tigris have very recently disappeared, and mingled with the desert; and concerning the *cities* also of *Chaldea*, the word is true that they *are desolations*. For "the whole country is strewed over with the débris of Gre-

[1] Mignan's Travels, p. 81. [2] Mignan's Travels, p. 82.
[3] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 265, 266.
[4] Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. pp. 182, 183.
[5] Ibid. pp. 272, 278.

cian, Roman, and Arabian towns, confounded in the same mass of rubbish."[1]

But while these lie in indiscriminate ruins, the chief of the cities of Chaldea, the first in name and in power that ever existed in the world, bears many a defined mark of the judgments of Heaven.

FALLEN BABYLON.

The progressive and predicted decline of Babylon the Great, till it ceased to be a city, has already been briefly detailed. About the beginning of the Christian era a small portion of it was inhabited, and the far greater part was cultivated.[2] It diminished as Seleucia increased, and the latter became the greater city. In the second century nothing but the walls remained. It became gradually a great desert; and, in the fourth century, its walls, repaired for that purpose, formed an enclosure for wild beasts, and Babylon was converted into a field for the chase—a hunting-place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs. The name and the remnant were cut off from Babylon; and there is a blank, during the interval of many ages, in the history of its mutilated remains and of its mouldering decay. It remained long in the possession of the Saracens; and abundant evidence has since been given, that every feature of its prophesied desolation is now distinctly visible, for the most ancient historians bore not a clearer testimony to facts confirmatory of the prophecies relative to its first siege and capture by Cyrus, than the latest travellers bear to the fulfilment of those which refer to its final and permanent ruin. The identity of its site has been completely established.[3] And the truth of every general and every particular prediction is now so clearly demonstrated, that a simple exhibition of the facts precludes

[1] Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. ii. p. 119.

[2] Diod. Sic. tom. ii. p. 35.

[3] Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, p. 349; Keppel's Narrative, p. 171.

the possibility of any cavil, and supersedes the necessity of any reasoning on the subject.

It is not merely the general desolation of Babylon—however much that alone would have surpassed all human foresight—which the Lord declared by the mouth of his prophets. In their *vision*, they saw not more clearly, nor defined more precisely, the future history of Babylon, from the height of its glory to the oblivion of its name, than they saw and depicted *fallen Babylon* as now it lies, and as, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, it has, for the first time, been fully described.[1] And now, when *an end has come upon Babylon*, after a long succession of ages has wrought out its utter desolation, both the pen and the pencil of travellers, who have traversed and inspected its ruins, must be combined, in order to delineate what the word of God, by the prophets, told from the beginning that that end would be.

Truth ever scorns the discordant and encumbering aid of error: but to diverge in the least from the most precise facts, would here weaken and destroy the argument; for the predictions correspond not closely with any thing, except alone with the express and literal reality. To swerve from it is, in the same degree, to vary from them: and any misrepresentation would be no less hurtful than iniquitous. But the actual fact renders any exaggeration impossible, and any fiction poor. Fancy could not have feigned a contrast more complete, nor a destruction greater than that which has come from the Almighty upon Babylon. And though the greatest city on which the sun ever shone is now a *desolate wilderness*, there is scarcely any spot on earth more clearly defined—and none could be more accurately delineated by the hands of a draftsman—than the scene of Baby-

[1] Niebuhr, Ives, Irwin, Ottar, Evirs, Thevenot, Della Valle, Texeira, Edrisi, Abulfeda, and Balbi, were consulted by Major Rennell; to these may now be added, Mr. Rich, Sir Robert Ker Porter, Captain Frederick, the Hon. Major Keppel, Colonel Kenneir, Mr. Buckingham, and Captain Mignan,—most of whom were accompanied by others.

lon's desolation is set before us in the very words of the prophets; and no words could now be chosen like unto those, which for two thousand five hundred years have been its "burden"—the burden which now it bears.

Such is the multiplicity of prophecies and the accumulation of facts, that the very abundance of evidence increases the difficulty of arranging them, in a condensed form, and thus appropriating its specific fulfilment to each precise and separate prediction; and many of them may be viewed connectedly. All who have visited Babylon concur in acknowledging or testifying that the desolation is exactly such as was foretold. They, in general, apply the more prominent predictions; and, in minute details, they sometimes unconsciously adopt, without any allusion or reference, the words of inspiration.

Babylon is wholly desolate. It has become heaps; it is cut down to the ground; brought down to the grave; trodden on; uninhabited; its foundations fallen; its walls thrown down, and utterly broken; its loftiest edifices rolled down from the rocks; the golden city has ceased; the worms are spread under it, and the worms cover it, &c. There the Arabian pitches not his tent; there the shepherds make not their folds; but wild beasts of the desert lie there, and their houses are full of doleful creatures, and owls dwell there, &c. It is a possession for the bittern, and a dwelling-place for dragons; a wilderness, a dry land and a desert; a burnt mountain; pools of water; spoiled; empty; nothing left; utterly destroyed; every one that goeth by it is astonished, &c. &c. &c.

Babylon shall become heaps. Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, is now the greatest of ruins. "Immense tumuli of temples, palaces, and human habitations of every description," are everywhere seen, and form "long and varied lines of ruins," which in some places, "rather resemble natural hills than *mounds* which cover the remains of great and splendid edifices."[1] Those buildings which were once the labour of slaves and the

[1] Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 294, 297.

pride of kings, are now misshapen heaps of rubbish. "The whole face of the country is covered with vestiges of building, in some places consisting of brick walls surprisingly fresh, in others, merely a *vast succession of mounds* of rubbish, of such indeterminate figures, variety and extent, as to involve the person who should have formed any theory, in inextricable confusion."[1] "Long mounds running from north to south, are crossed by others from east to west;" and are only distinguished by their form, direction, and number, from the decayed banks of canals. "The greater part of the mounds are certainly the remains of buildings, originally disposed in streets, and crossing each other at right angles."[2] The more distinct and prominent of these "heaps" are double, or lie in parallel lines, each exceeding twenty feet, and "are intersected by cross passages, in such a manner as to place beyond a doubt the fact of their being rows of houses or streets fallen to decay."[3] Such was the form of the streets of Babylon, leading towards the gates; and such are now the lines of its heaps. "There are also, in some places, two hollow channels, and three mounds, running parallel to each other for a considerable distance, the central mound being, in such cases, a broader and flatter mass than the other two, as if there had been two streets going parallel to each other, the central range of houses which divided them being twice the size of the others, from their being double residences, with a front and door of entrance to face each avenue."[4] "Irregular hillocks and mounds, *formed over* masses of ruins, present at every step memorials of the past."[5]

From the temple of Belus and the two royal palaces, to the streets of the city and single dwellings, all have *become heaps;* and the only difference or gradation now is from the vast and solid masses of ruins which look like mountains, to the slight mound that is scarcely ele-

[1] Rich's Memoir, p. 2.
[2] Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 298.
[3] Ibid. p. 299.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Mignan's Travels, vol. ii. p. 116.

vated above the plain. *Babylon is fallen*, literally FALLEN to such a degree that those who stand on its site and look on numerous parallel mounds, with a hollow space between, are sometimes at a loss to distinguish between the remains of a street or a canal, or to tell where the crowds frequented or where the waters flowed. *Babylon is fallen*, till its ruins cannot fall lower than they lie. *It is cut down to the ground. Her foundations are fallen;* and the ruins rest not on them. Its palaces, temples, streets and houses, lie "*buried* in shapeless heaps."[1] And "the view of Babylon," as taken from the spot, is truly a picture of utter desolation, presenting its *heaps* to the eye, and showing how, as if literally buried under them, *Babylon is brought down to the grave.*

Cast her up as heaps. Mr. Rich, in describing a grand heap of ruins, the shape of which is nearly a square of seven hundred yards in length and breadth, states that the workmen pierce into it in every direction, in search of bricks, "hollowing out deep ravines and pits, and *throwing up* the rubbish *in heaps* on the surface."[2] "The summit of the Kasr," (supposed to have been the lesser palace,) is in like manner "covered with *heaps of rubbish.*"

Let nothing of her be left. "Vast heaps constitute *all that now remains* of ancient Babylon."[3] All its grandeur is departed; all its treasures have been spoiled; all its excellence has utterly vanished; the very heaps are searched for bricks when nothing else can be found; even these are *not left* wherever they can be taken away, and Babylon has for ages been "a quarry above ground," ready to the hand of every successive despoiler. Without the most remote allusion to this prophecy, Captain Mignan describes a mound attached to the palace, ninety yards in breadth by half that height, the whole of which is deeply furrowed in the same manner as the generality of the mounds. "The ground is extremely soft, and tiresome to walk over, and appears

[1] Porter's Travels, p. 294. [2] Rich's Memoir, p. 22
[3] Keppel's Narrative, p. 196.

completely exhausted of all its building materials: *nothing now is left* save one towering hill, the earth of which is mixed with *fragments* of broken brick, red varnished pottery, tile, bitumen, mortar, glass, shells, and pieces of mother of pearl,"[1]—worthless fragments, of no value to the poorest. *From thence shall she be taken—let nothing of her be left.* One traveller, towards the end of last century, passed over the site of ancient Babylon, without being conscious of having traversed it.[2]

Babylon shall be pools of water. While the workmen *cast her up as heaps* in piling up the rubbish while excavating for bricks, that they may *take* them *from thence*, and that *nothing may be left;* they labour more than trebly in the fulfilment of prophecy, for the numerous and deep excavations form *pools of water* on the overflowing of the Euphrates, and, annually filled, they are not dried up throughout the year. Deep cavities are also formed by the Arabs, when digging for hidden treasure."[3] "The ground is sometimes covered with pools of water in the hollows."[4]

Sit on the dust, sit on the ground, O daughter of the Chaldeans. The *surface* of the mounds, which form all that remains of Babylon, consists of decomposed buildings, reduced to dust; and over all the ancient streets and habitations, there is literally nothing but the dust or the ground on which to sit.

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered. "Our path," says Captain Mignan, "lay through the great mass of ruined heaps on the site of 'shrunken Babylon.' And I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared before me."[5]

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness. There reigns throughout the ruins "a silence as profound as

[1] Mignan's Travels, pp. 199, 200.

[2] Transactions of the Literary Society at Bombay, vol. i. p. 130; Note, Cunningham's Journey to India, 1785.

[3] Mignan's Travels, p. 213.

[4] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 296; Keppel's Travels, vol. i. p. 125.

[5] Mignan's Travels, p. 116.

the grave."[1] Babylon is now a "silent scene, a sublime solitude."[2]

It shall never be inhabited, nor dwelt in from generation to generation. From Rauwolff's testimony it appears that in the sixteenth century "there was not a house to be seen."[3] And now "the eye wanders over a *barren desert*, in which the ruins are nearly the only indication that it ever had been inhabited." "It is impossible," adds Major Keppel, "to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present, that *she should never be inhabited;* that the 'Arabian should not pitch his tent there;' that she should 'become heaps;' that her cities should be 'a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness.'"[4] "Babylon is spurned alike by the heel of the Ottomans, the Israelites, and the sons of Ishmael."[5] It is "a *tenantless* and desolate metropolis."[6] *It shall not be inhabited, but be wholly desolate.*

Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. It was prophesied of Ammon that it should be a stable for camels and a couching-place for flocks; and of Philistia, that it should be cottages for shepherds, and a pasture for flocks. But Babylon was to be visited with a far greater desolation, and to become unfit or unsuiting even for such a purpose. And that neither a tent would be pitched there, even by an Arab, nor a fold made by a shepherd, implies the last degree of solitude and desolation. "It is common in these parts for shepherds to make use of ruined edifices to shelter their flocks in."[7] But Babylon is an exception. Instead of taking the bricks *from thence*, the shepherd might with facility erect a defence from wild beasts, and make a fold for his flock amidst the heaps of Babylon; and the Arab who fearlessly traverses it by

[1] Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 294. [2] Ibid. p. 407.
[3] Ibid. p. 174.
[4] Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 107. [5] Mignan's Travels, p. 108
[6] Ibid. p. 234. [7] Ibid. p. 235

day, might pitch his tent by night. But neither the one nor the other could now be persuaded to remain a single night among the ruins. The superstitious dread of evil spirits, far more than the natural terror of the wild beasts, effectually prevents them. Captain Mignan was accompanied by six *Arabs*, completely armed, but he "could not induce them to remain towards night, from the apprehension of evil spirits. It is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people, who are very deeply imbued with superstition." And when the sun sunk behind the Mujelibé, and the moon would have still lighted his way among the ruins, it was with infinite regret that he obeyed "*the summons of his guides.*"[1] "*All the people of the country assert* that it is extremely dangerous to *approach* this mound after night-fall, on account of the multitude of evil spirits by which it is haunted."[2] *Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there.* But

Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs (goats) *shall dance there*, &c. "There are many dens of wild beasts in various parts. There are quantities of porcupine quills." (kephud?) And while the lower excavations are often pools of water, "in most of the cavities are numbers of bats and *owls.*"[3] "These souterrains, (caverns,) over which the chambers of majesty may have been spread, are now the refuge of jackals and other savage animals. The mouths of their entrances are strewed with the bones of sheep and *goats;* and the loathsome smell that issues from most of them is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den."[4] The king of the forest now ranges over the site of that Babylon which Nebuchadnezzar built for his own glory. And the temple of Belus, the greatest work of man, is now like unto a natural den of lions. "Two or three majes-

[1] Mignan's Travels, pp. 201, 235.
[2] Rich's Mem. p. 27; Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 397.
[3] Ibid. p. 30.
[4] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 342.

tic lions" were seen upon its heights, by Sir Robert Ker Porter, as he was approaching it; and "the broad prints of their feet were left plain in the clayey soil."[1] Major Keppel saw there a similar foot-print of a lion. It is also the unmolested retreat of jackals, hyenas, and other noxious animals.[2] Wild beasts are "numerous" at the *Mujelibé*, as well as on *Birs Nimrood*. "The mound was full of large holes; we entered some of them, and found them strewed with the carcasses and skeletons of animals recently killed. The ordure of wild beasts was so strong that prudence got the better of curiosity, for we had no doubt as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Our guides, indeed, told us that all the ruins abounded in lions and other wild beasts; so literally has the divine prediction been fulfilled, that wild beasts of the desert should lie there, and their houses be full of doleful creatures; that the wild beast of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses."[3]

The sea is come upon Babylon. She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. The traces of the western bank of the Euphrates are now no longer discernible. The river overflows unrestrained; and the very ruins, "with every appearance of the embankment," have been swept away. "The ground there is low and marshy, and presents not the slightest vestige of former buildings, of any description whatever."[4] "Morasses and ponds tracked the ground in various parts. For a long time after the general subsiding of the Euphrates, great part of this plain is little better than a swamp," &c.[5] "The ruins of Babylon are then *inundated*, so as to render many parts of them inaccessible, by converting the valleys among them into morasses."[6] But while Babylon *is thus covered with the multitude of waves and the waters come upon it*, yet, in striking contrast and seeming contradic-

[1] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 387.
[2] Kinneir's Memoir, p. 279.
[3] Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. pp. 179, 180.
[4] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 278.
[5] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 389, 390.
[6] Rich's Memoir, p. 13.

tion to such a feature of desolation, (like the formation of *pools of water* from the *casting up of heaps*,) at all times the elevated sun-burnt ruins, which the waters do not overflow, and generally throughout the year, the "dry waste, and parched and burning plain,"[1] on which the heaps of Babylon lie, equally prove that it is *a desert, a dry land, and a wilderness.* One part, even on the western side of the river, is "low and *marshy*, and another an *arid* desert."[2]

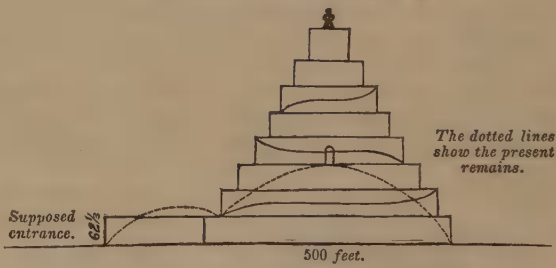
It shall never be inhabited. It shall be utterly desolate. "Ruins composed, like those of Babylon, of heaps of rubbish impregnated with nitre, cannot be cultivated."[3] "The decomposing materials of a Babylonian structure doom the earth on which they perish to everlasting sterility. On this part of the plain, both where traces of buildings were left, and where none had stood, all seemed equally *naked* of vegetation; the whole ground appearing as if it had been washed over and over again, by the coming and receding waters, till every bit of genial soil was swept away; its half-clay, half-sandy surface being left in ridgy streaks, like what is often seen on the flat shores of the sea after the retreating of the tide."[4] Babylon, which in its pride did say, I shall be a lady for ever is no more called the lady of kingdoms, but is *desolate for ever.*

Bel boweth down. The temple of Belus or Baal, here evidently spoken of, was a stadium, or furlong, in height, computed by Major Rennell at five hundred, and by Prideaux at six hundred feet. By the lowest computation it was higher than the greatest of the pyramids. The *highest* of the heaps which now constitute fallen Babylon, is the Birs Nimrood, generally supposed to have been the temple of Belus. The heap occupies a larger space of ground than that on which the temple stood, having spread in falling down, beyond its original base. It rests

[1] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 302, 305.
[2] Mignan's Travels, p. 139. Plan.
[3] Rich's Memoir, p. 16.
[4] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 392.

not now upon its ancient foundations, but lies upon the earth, an enormous mass of ruin. "At first sight it presents the appearance of a hill, with a castle at the top,"[1] so as not only to deceive the eye in beholding it at a distance, or in looking on its picture; but, "incredible as it may seem, the ruins on the summit of it are actually those spoken of by Père Emanuel, who takes no sort of notice of the prodigious mound on which they are elevated. It is almost needless to observe, that the whole of the mound is itself a ruin;"[2] and it is altogether needless to add another word, to show that it is bowed down, as may be seen by the sketch here inserted, of the comparative ancient and modern height annexed to the Plan of Birs Nimrood, in Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels.[3]

ELEVATION OF BIRS NIMROOD (NORTH FACE) ACCORDING TO STRABO AND HERODOTUS.



PLAN OF BIRS NIMROOD.

Bel is confounded. Originally constructed of eight successive towers, one rising above another, it is now consolidated into one irregular hill, presenting a different aspect and of different altitudes on every side,—a confused and misshapen mass. "The eastern face presents two stages of hill; the first showing an elevation of about sixty feet, cloven in the middle into a deep ravine,

[1] Mignan's Travels, p. 192. [2] Rich's Memoir, p. 37.
[3] Vol. ii. p. 323.

and intersected in all directions by furrows channelled there by the descending rains of succeeding ages. The summit of this first stage stretches in rather a flattened sweep to the base of the second ascent, which springs out of the first in a steep and abrupt conical form, terminated on the top by a solitary standing fragment of brick-work, like the ruin of a tower. From the foundation of the whole pile to the base of this piece of ruin, measures about two hundred feet, and from the bottom of the ruin to its shattered top are thirty-five feet. On the western side, the entire mass rises at once from the plain in one stupendous, though irregular, pyramidal hill, broken, in the slopes of its sweeping acclivities, by the devastations of time and rougher destruction. The southern and northern fronts are particularly abrupt."[1] Such, and so *confounded* is now the temple of Belus.

I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. On the summits of the hill are "immense fragments of brick-work of no determinate figures, tumbled together, and converted into solid vitrified masses."[2] "Some of these huge fragments measured twelve feet in height, by twenty-four in circumference; and from the circumstance of the standing brick-work having remained in a perfect state, the change exhibited in these is only accountable from their having been exposed to the *fiercest fire, or rather, scathed by lightning.*"[3] "They are completely molten—a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the tower, which in parts resembles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, 'a burnt mountain.' In the denunciation respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah evidently alludes, when he says that it should be, 'as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,' on which cities, it is said, 'the Lord rained brimstone and fire.' 'Her high gates shall be burned with fire, and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and

[1] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 310.
[2] Rich's Memoir, p. 36. [3] Mignan's Travels, p. 207.

they shall be weary.'"[1] "In many of these immense unshapen masses, might be traced the gradual effects of the consuming power, which had produced so remarkable an appearance; exhibiting parts burnt to that variegated dark hue, seen in the vitrified matter lying about in glass manufactories; while, through the whole of these awful testimonies of the fire, (whatever fire it was!) which, doubtless, hurled them from their original elevation," (*I will roll thee down from the rocks,*) "the regular lines of the cement are visible, and so hardened in common with the bricks, that when the masses are struck they ring like glass. On examining the base of the standing wall, contiguous to these huge transmuted substances, it is found tolerably free from any similar changes, in short, quite in its original state; hence," continues Sir Robert Ker Porter, "I draw the conclusion, that the consuming power acted from above, and that the scattered ruin fell from some higher point than the summit of the present standing fragment. The heat of the fire which produced such amazing effects, must have burned with the force of the strongest furnace; and from the general appearance of the cleft in the wall, and these vitrified masses, I should be induced to attribute the catastrophe to lightning from heaven. Ruins, by the explosion of any combustible matter, would have exhibited very different appearances."[2]

"The fallen masses bear evident proof of the operation of fire having been continued on them, as well after they were broken down as before, since every part of their surface has been so equally exposed to it, that many of them have acquired a rounded form, and in none can the place of separation from its adjoining one be traced by any appearance of superior freshness, or any exemption from the influence of the destroying flame."[3]

The high gates of the temple of Belus, which were standing in the time of Herodotus, have been *burnt with*

[1] Keppel's Narrative, pp. 194, 195.
[2] Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 312, 313
[3] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 375.

fire; the vitrified masses, which fell when *Bel bowed down*, rest on the top of its stupendous ruins. *The hand of the Lord has been stretched upon it; it has been rolled down from the rocks, and has been made a burnt mountain*,—of which it was farther prophesied,

They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations, but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord. The old wastes of Zion shall be built; its former desolations shall be raised up; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. But it shall not be with Bel as with Zion, nor with Babylon as with Jerusalem. For as the "heaps of rubbish, impregnated with nitre," which cover the site of Babylon, "cannot be cultivated,"[1] so the vitrified masses on the summit of Birs Nimrood cannot be rebuilt. Though still they be of the hardest substance, and indestructible by the elements, and though once they formed the highest pinnacles of Belus, yet, incapable of being hewn into any regular form, they neither are nor can now be taken *for a corner or for foundations.* And the bricks on the solid fragments of wall, which rest on the summit, though neither scathed nor molten, are so firmly cemented, that, according to Mr. Rich, "it is nearly impossible to detach any of them whole,"[2] or, as Captain Mignan still more forcibly states, "they are so firmly cemented, that it is utterly impossible to detach any of them."[3] "My most violent attempts," says Sir Robert Ker Porter, "could not separate them;"[4] and Mr. Buckingham, in assigning reasons for lessening the wonder at the total disappearance of the walls at this distant period, and speaking of the Birs Nimrood generally, observes, that "the burnt bricks (the only ones sought after) which are found in the Mujelibé, the Kasr, and the Birs Nimrood, the only three *great monuments* in which there are any traces of their having been used, are so difficult, in the two last indeed so impossible, to be extracted whole, from the tenacity of the cement in which they are laid,

[1] Rich's Memoir, p. 16.
[2] Ibid. p. 36.
[3] Mignan's Travels, p. 206.
[4] Travels, vol. ii. p. 311.

that they could never have been resorted to while any considerable portion of the walls existed to furnish an easier supply; even now, though some portion of the mounds on the eastern bank of the river" (the Birs is on the western side) "are occasionally dug into for bricks, they are not extracted without a comparatively great expense, and very few of them whole, in proportion to the great number of fragments that come up with them.[1] Around the tower there is not a single whole brick to be seen.[2]

These united testimonies, given without allusion to the prediction, afford a better than any conjectural commentary, such as previously was given without reference to these facts.

While of Babylon, in general, it is said that it would be *taken from thence;* and while, in many places, *nothing is left;* yet, of the *burnt mountain*, which forms an accumulation of ruins enough in magnitude to build a city, men do not take a stone for foundations nor a stone for a corner. Having undergone the action of the fiercest fire, and being completely molten, the masses on the summit of Bel, on which the hand of the Lord has been stretched, cannot be reduced into any other form or substance, nor be built up again by the hand of man. And the tower of Babel, afterwards the temple of Belus, which witnessed the first dispersion of mankind, shall itself be witnessed by the latest generation, even as now it stands *desolate for ever*,—an indestructible monument of human pride and folly, and of divine judgment and truth. The greatest of the ruins, as once of the edifices of Babylon, is rolled down into a vast, indiscriminate, cloven, confounded, useless, and blasted mass, from which fragments might be hurled with as little injury to the ruined heap, as from a bare and rocky mountain's side. Such is the triumph of the word of the living God over the proudest of the temples of Baal.

Merodach is broken in pieces. Merodach was a name

[1] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 332.
[2] Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 329.

or title common to the princes and kings of Babylon, of which, in the brief scriptural references to their history, two instances are recorded, viz. Merodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, who exercised the office of government, and Evil-Merodach, who lived in the days of Jeremiah. From Merodach being here associated with Bel, or the temple of Belus, and from the similarity of their judgments—the one *bowed down and confounded*, and the other *broken in pieces*—it may reasonably be inferred that some other famous Babylonian building is here also denoted; while, at the same time, the express identity of the name with that of the kings of Babylon, and even with Evil-Merodach, then residing there, it may with equal reason be inferred that, under the name of Merodach, the palace is spoken of by the prophet. And next to the idolatrous temple, as the seat of false worship which corrupted and destroyed the nations, it may well be imagined that the royal residence of the despot who oppressed the people of Israel, and made the earth to tremble, would be selected as the marked object of the righteous judgments of God. And secondary only to the Birs Nimrood, in the greatness of its ruins, is the Mujelibé or Makloube, generally understood and described by travellers as the remains of the chief palace of Babylon.

The palace of the king of Babylon almost vied with the great temple of their god. And there is now some controversy, in which of the principal mountainous heaps the one or the other lies buried. But the *utter desolation* of both leaves no room for any debate on the question,—which of the twain is *bowed down and confounded*, and which of them is *broken in pieces*.

The two palaces or castles of Babylon were strongly fortified. And the larger was surrounded by three walls of great extent.[1] When the city was suddenly taken by Demetrius, he seized on one of the castles by surprise, and displaced its garrison by seven thousand of his own

[1] Diodor. Sic. lib. ii. p. 29; Herod. lib. i. cap. clxxxi.

troops, whom he stationed within it.[1] Of the other he could not make himself master. Their extent and strength, at a period of three hundred years after the delivery of the prophecy, are thus sufficiently demonstrated. The solidity of the structure of the greater, as well as of the lesser palace, might have warranted the belief of its unbroken durability for ages. And never was there a building whose splendour and magnificence were in greater contrast to its present desolation. The vestiges of the walls which surrounded it are still to be seen, and serve with other circumstances to identify it with the Mujelibé, as the name Merodach is identified with the palace. *It is broken in pieces*, and hence its name Mujelibé, signifying overturned, or turned upside down. Its circumference is about half a mile; its height one hundred and forty feet. But it is "a mass of confusion, none of its members being distinguishable."[2] The existence of chambers, passages, and cellars, of different forms and sizes, and built of different materials, has been fully ascertained.[3] It is the receptacle of wild beasts, and full of doleful creatures: wild beasts cry in the desolate houses, and *dragons in the pleasant palaces;* "venomous reptiles being very numerous throughout the ruins."[4] "All the sides are worn into furrows by the weather, and in some places where several channels of rain have united together, these furrows are of great depth, and penetrate a considerable way into the mound."[5] "The *sides* of the ruin exhibit *hollows* worn partly by the weather."[6] *It is brought down to the grave, to the sides of the* PIT.

They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? Narrowly to look on and to consider even the view of the Mujelibé, is to see what the palace of Babylon, in which kings proud as

[1] Plutarch's Life of Demetrius.
[2] Della Valle. See Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 135. Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 273.
[3] Ibid. p. 274.
[4] Mignan's Travels, p. 168.
[5] Rich's Memoir, p. 29.
[6] Mignan's Travels, p. 167.

"Lucifer," boasted of exalting themselves above the "stars of God," has now become, and how, cut down to the ground, it is *broken in pieces.*

"On pacing over the loose stones and fragments of brick-work which lay scattered through the immense fabric, and surveying the sublimity of the ruins," says Captain Mignan, "I naturally recurred to the time when these walls stood proudly in their original splendour,—when the halls were the scenes of festive magnificence, and when they resounded to the voices of those whom death has long since swept from the earth. This very pile was once the seat of luxury and vice; now abandoned to decay, and exhibiting a melancholy instance of the retribution of Heaven. It stands alone;—the solitary habitation of the goatherd marks not the forsaken site."[1] *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols; the worms are spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.*

Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet. "Several deep excavations have been made in different places, into the sides of the Mujelibé; some probably by the wearing of the seasons; but many others have been dug by the rapacity of the Turks, tearing up its bowels in search of hidden treasure,"—*as if the palace of Babylon were cast out of its grave.* "Several *penetrate very far* into the body of the structure," till it has become *as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword.* "And some, it is likely, have never yet been explored, the *wild beasts of the desert* literally keeping guard over them."[2] "The mound was full of large holes"[3]—*thrust through.*

Near to the Mujelibé, on the supposed site of the hanging gardens which were situated within the walls

[1] Mignan's Travels, pp. 172, 173.
[2] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 342.
[3] Keppel's Travels, vol. i. p. 179.

of the palace, "the ruins are so *perforated*, in consequence of the digging for bricks, that the original design is entirely lost. All that could favour any conjecture of gardens built on terraces, are two *subterranean passages*. There can be no doubt that both *passages* are of vast extent; they are lined with bricks laid in with bitumen and *covered over with large masses of stone*. This is nearly the only place where stone is observable."[1] Arches built upon arches raised the hanging gardens from terrace to terrace, till the highest was on a level with the top of the city walls. Now they *are cast out like an abominable branch*—and *subterranean* passages are disclosed,—*down to the stones of the pit*.

As a carcass trodden under feet. The streets of Babylon were parallel, crossed by others at right angles, and abounded with houses three and four stories high;[2] and none can now traverse the site of Babylon, or find any other path, without *treading them under foot*. The traveller directs his course to the highest mounds; and there are none, whether temples or palaces, that are not *trodden on*. The Mujelibé "rises in a steep ascent, *over which* the passengers can only go up by the winding paths *worn* by frequent visits to the ruined edifice."[3]

Her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces; all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. "This place," says Beauchamp, quoted by Major Rennell, "and the mount of Babel, are commonly called by the Arabs Makloube, that is, turned *topsy-turvy*. I was informed by the master-mason, employed to dig for bricks, that the places from which he procured them were large thick walls and sometimes chambers. He has frequently found earthen vessels, *engraved marbles*, and about eight years ago, a *statue* as large as life, which he *threw among the rubbish*. On one wall of the chamber, he found the figure of a cow, and of the sun and moon, formed of varnished bricks. Sometimes *idols* of clay are found, representing human

[1] Kep,ıel's Travels, vol. i. p. 205. [2] Herod. lib. i. cap. clxxx.
[3] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 258.

figures."[1] "Small figures of brass or copper are found at Babylon."[2] "Bronze antiquities, generally much corroded with rust, but exhibiting small figures of men and animals are *often* found among the ruins,"[3] or *broken unto the ground.*

The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken. They were so broad, that, as ancient historians relate, six chariots could be driven on them abreast; or a chariot and four horses might pass and turn. They existed, as walls, for more than a thousand years after the prophecy was delivered; and long after the sentence of utter destruction had gone forth against them, they were numbered among "the seven wonders of the world." And what can be more wonderful now, or what could have been more inconceivable by man, when Babylon was in its strength and glory, than that the broad walls of Babylon should be so utterly broken, that it cannot be determined with certainty that even the slightest vestige of them exists?

"All accounts agree," says Mr. Rich, "in the height of the walls, which was fifty cubits, having been reduced to these dimensions from the prodigious height of three hundred and fifty feet," (formerly stated, by the lowest computation of the length of the cubit, at three hundred feet,) "by Darius Hystaspis, after the rebellion of the town in order to render it less defensible. I have not been fortunate enough to discover the *least trace* of them in *any part* of the ruins at Hillah; which is rather an unaccountable circumstance, considering that they survived the final ruin of the town, long after which they served as an enclosure for a park; in which comparatively perfect state St. Jerome informs us they remained in his time."[4]

In the sixteenth century they were seen for the last time by any European traveller, (so far as the author has been able to trace,) before they were finally so utterly

[1] Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, p. 362.
[2] Rich's Second Memoir, p. 58. [3] Mignan's Travels, p 229.
[4] Rich's Memoir, pp. 43, 44.

broken as totally to disappear. And it is interesting to mark both the time and the manner in which the walls of Babylon, like the city of which they were the impregnable yet unavailing defence, were brought down to the grave, to be seen no more.

"The meanwhile," as Rauwolff describes them, "when we were lodged there, I considered and viewed this ascent, and found that there were two behind one another," (Herodotus states that there was both an inner, or interior, and outer wall[1]) "distinguished by a ditch, and extending themselves like unto two parallel *walls* a great way about, and that they were open in some places, where one might go through like gates; wherefore I believe that they were the wall of the old town that went about them; and that the places where they were open have been anciently the gates (whereof there were one hundred) of that town. And this the rather because I saw in some places under the sand (wherewith the two ascents were *almost covered*) the *old wall* plainly appear."[2]

The cities of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Destagered, Kufa, and anciently many others in the vicinity, together with the more modern towns of Mesched Ali, Mesched Hussein, and Hillah, "with towns, villages and caravansaries without number;"[3] have, in all probability, been chiefly built out of the walls of Babylon. Like the city, the walls have been *taken from thence*, till none of them are *left*. The rains of many hundred years, and the waters coming upon them annually by the overflowing of the Euphrates, have also, in all likelihood, washed down the dust and rubbish from the broken and dilapidated walls into the ditch from which they were originally taken, till at last the sand of the parched desert has smoothed them into a plain, and added the place where they stood to the wilderness, so that the *broad walls of Babylon are utterly broken.* And now, as the subjoined evidence suppletory of what has already been adduced,

[1] Lib. i. c. 181. [2] Ray's Collection of Travels, pp. 177, 178.
[3] Sir. R K. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 338.

fully proves; it may verily be said that the loftiest wall ever built by man, as well as the "greatest city on which the sun ever shone," which these walls surrounded, and the most fertile of countries, of which Babylon the great was the capital and the glory,—have all been *swept by the Lord of Hosts with the besom of destruction.*

A chapter of sixty pages in length, of Mr. Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, is entitled, "Search after the wall of Babylon." After a long and fruitless search, he discovered on the eastern boundary of the ruins, on the *summit* of an *oval mound* from seventy to eighty feet in height, and from three to four hundred feet in circumference, "a mass of solid wall, about thirty feet in length, by twelve or fifteen in thickness, yet evidently once of much greater dimensions each way, the work being, in its present state, *broken* and incomplete *in every part*:"[1] and this heap of ruin and fragment of wall he conjectured to be a part—the only part, if such it be, that can be discovered—of the walls of Babylon, *so utterly* are *they broken.* Beyond this there is not even a pretension to the discovery of any part of them.

Captain Frederick, of whose journey it was the "principal object to search for the remains of the wall and ditch that had compassed Babylon," states, that neither of these has been seen by any modern traveller. "All my inquiries among the Arabs," he adds, "on this subject, completely failed in producing the smallest effect. Within the space of twenty-one miles in length, along the banks of the Euphrates, and twelve miles across it in breadth, I was unable to perceive any thing that could admit of my imagining that either a wall or a ditch had existed within this extensive area. If any remains do exist of the walls, they must have been of greater circumference than is allowed by modern geographers. I may possibly have been deceived; but I spared no pains to prevent it. I never was employed in riding and

[1] Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 306, 307.

walking less than eight hours for six successive days, and upwards of twelve on the seventh."[1]

Major Keppel relates, that he and the party who accompanied him, "in common with other travellers, had totally failed in discovering any trace of the city walls;" and he adds, "the divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah—*the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.*"[2]

Babylon shall be an astonishment—Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished. It is impossible to think on what Babylon was, and to be an eye-witness of what it is, without *astonishment.* On first entering its ruins, Sir Robert Ker Porter thus expresses his feelings: "I could not but feel an indescribable awe in thus passing, as it were, into the gates of fallen Babylon."[3] "I cannot portray," says Captain Mignan, "the overpowering sensation of reverential awe that possessed my mind, while contemplating the extent and magnitude of ruin and devastation on every side."[4]

How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder! How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! The following interesting description has lately been given from the spot. After speaking of the ruined embankment, divided and subdivided again and again, like a sort of tangled net-work, over the apparently interminable ground; of large and wide-spreading morasses; of ancient foundations; and of chains of undulated heaps; Sir Robert Ker Porter emphatically adds: "The whole view was particularly solemn. The majestic stream of the Euphrates, wandering in solitude, like a pilgrim monarch through the silent ruins of his devastated kingdom, still appeared a noble river under all the

[1] Transactions of the Literary Society, Bombay, vol. i. pp. 130, 131.

[2] Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 175; Jer. li. 58.

[3] Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 294.

[4] Mignan's Travels, p. 117.

disadvantages of its desert-tracked course. Its banks were hoary with reeds; and the gray osier willows were yet there on which the captives of Israel hung up their harps, and, while Jerusalem was not, refused to be comforted. But how has the rest of the scene changed since then! At that time those broken hills were palaces; those long, undulating mounds, streets; this vast solitude filled with the busy subjects of the proud daughter of the East. Now wasted with misery, her *habitations are not to be found*, and for herself, *the worm is spread over her*."[1]

From palaces converted into broken hills; from streets to long lines of heaps; from the throne of the world to sitting in the dust; from the hum of mighty Babylon to the death-like silence that rests upon the grave to which it is brought down; from the great storehouse of the world, where treasures were gathered from every quarter; and the prison-house of the captive Jews, where, not loosed to return homewards, they served in a hard bondage, to Babylon the spoil of many nations, itself taken from thence, and nothing left; from a vast metropolis, the place of palaces, and the glory of kingdoms, whither multitudes ever flowed, to a dreaded and shunned spot, not inhabited nor dwelt in from generation to generation, where even the Arabian, though the son of the desert, pitches not his tent, and where the shepherds make not their folds; from the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, to the taking away of bricks, and to an uncovered nakedness; from making the earth to tremble, and shaking kingdoms, to being cast out of the grave like an abominable branch; from the many nations and great kings from the coasts of the earth, that have so often come up against Babylon, to the workmen that still cast her up as heaps, and add to the number of pools in her ruins; from the immense artificial lake, many miles in circumference, by means of which the annual rising of the Euphrates was regulated and restrained, to these pools of water, a few

[1] Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 207.

yards round, dug by the workmen, and filled by the river; from the first and greatest of temples, to a burnt mountain desolate for ever; from the golden image, forty feet in height, which stood on the top of the temple of Belus, to all the graven images of her gods, that are broken unto the ground and mingled with the dust; from the splendid and luxuriant festivals of Babylonian monarchs, the noise of the viols, the pomp of Belshazzar's feast, and the godless revelry of a thousand lords drinking out of the golden vessels that had been taken from Zion, to the cry of wild beasts, the creeping of doleful creatures, of which their desolate houses and pleasant palaces are full, the nestling of owls in cavities, the dancing of wild goats on the ruinous mound as on a rock, and the dwelling-place of dragons and venomous reptiles; from arch upon arch, and terrace upon terrace, till the hanging gardens of Babylon rose like a mountain, down to the stones of the pit, now disclosed to view; from the palaces of princes who sat on the mount of the congregation, and thought in the pride of their heart to exalt themselves above the stars of God, to heaps cut down to the ground, perforated as the raiment of those that are slain, and as a carcass trodden under feet; from the broad walls of Babylon, in all their height, as Cyrus camped against them round about, seeking in vain a single point where congregated nations could scale the walls or force an opening, to the untraceable spot on which they stood, where there is nothing left to turn aside, or impede in their course, the worms that cover it; and finally, from Babylon the great, the wonder of the world, to fallen Babylon, the astonishment of all who go by it; in extremes like these, whatever changes they involve, and by whatever instrumentality they may have been wrought out, there is not to this hour, in this most marvellous history of Babylon, a single fact that may not most appropriately be ranked under a prediction, and that does not tally entirely with its express and precise fulfilment, while at the same time they all united show, as may now be seen—reading the judgments to the very letter,

and looking to the facts as they are—the destruction which has come from the Almighty upon Babylon.

Has not every purpose of the Lord been performed against Babylon? And having so clear illustrations of the facts before us, what mortal shall give a negative answer to the question, subjoined by their omniscient Author to these very prophecies?—"Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? and there is no God beside me;—declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Is it possible that there can be any attestation of the truth of prophecy, if it be not witnessed here? Is there any spot on earth which has undergone a more complete transformation? "The records of the human race," it has been said with truth, "do not present a contrast more striking than that between the primeval magnificence of Babylon, and its long desolation."[1] Its ruins have of late been carefully and scrupulously examined by different natives of Britain, of unimpeached veracity, and the result of every research is a more striking demonstration of the literal accomplishment of every prediction. How few spots are there on earth of which we have so clear and faithful a picture, as prophecy gave of fallen Babylon at a time when no spot on earth resembled it less than its present desolate solitary site! Or could any prophecies respecting any single place have been more precise or wonderful, or numerous, or true; or more gradually accomplished throughout many generations? And when they look at what Babylon was, and what it is, and perceive the minute realization of them all, may not nations learn wisdom, may not tyrants tremble, and may not skeptics think?

[1] Edinburgh Review, Num. l. p. 439

TYRE.

Tyre was the most celebrated city of Phœnicia, and the ancient emporium of the world. Its colonies were numerous and extensive. "It was the theatre of an immense commerce and navigation, the nursery of arts and science, and the city of perhaps the most industrious and active people ever known."[1] In the period of their greatest splendour and perfect independence, Tyre stood at the head of the Phœnician cities.[2] The kingdom of Carthage, the rival of Rome, was one of the colonies of Tyre. While this mart of nations was in the height of its opulence and power, and at least one hundred and twenty-five years before the destruction of old Tyre, Isaiah pronounced its irrevocable fall. Tyre on the island succeeded to the more ancient city on the continent: and—being inhabited by the same people, retaining the same name, being removed but a little space, and occupying in part the same ground; the fate of both is included in the prophecy. The pride and wickedness of the Tyrians, their exultation over the calamities of the Israelites, and their cruelty in selling them to slavery, are assigned as the reasons of the judgments that were to overtake them, or as the causes of the revelation of the destiny of their city. And the whole fate of Tyre was foretold.

Ezekiel's description of the commerce, riches, and pride of Tyre, the ancient Queen of the Ocean, is designated by Volney, a valuable historical fragment: and he cites the words, as he terms it, "in all their prophetic enthusiasm." But the prophet denounced its doom before he described its splendour and power; and he traced its future history, with all the precision of

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 210; Steph. Dic. p. 2039; Marshami Can. Chron. p. 304, &c.; Strabo, Bochart, &c.

[2] Heeren's Researches, vol. ii. p. 17.

truth, till the city that was perfect in beauty became a place whereon fishers spread their nets, till the stones and timber of its superb dwellings were cast into the midst of the waters, and the very dust was scraped from off the place where the princely merchants gloried in their pride, and heaped up their silver and their gold. The marvellous facts which Ezekiel and other prophets foretold, give to unobservant minds, the semblance of enthusiasm to their unerring words. And confessedly faithful to the facts, as was 'the historical fragment,' so also is the prophecy which contrasts with it, as exhibiting the entire reversal of Tyrian magnificence: and the prophetic history of the downfall and ruin of Tyre may be read more fully and clearly in the words of Ezekiel, than its history, prior to its celebrated siege by Alexander the Great, has been recorded in the extant works of profane writers.

Ezekiel's 'historical fragment' begins by declaring, "*The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people; she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and it shall become a spoil to the nations*, &c. Ezek. xxvi. 1—5.

The first of the *many nations* that came up against Tyre was the Chaldeans or Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar. History, without explicitly recording the facts or the result of the siege, relates little else than its duration for thirteen years; a defect which the possible (and lately reported) discovery of the lost works of Sanchoniathon, would in all likelihood supply. The length alone of the siege accords with the historical narration

given by Ezekiel at a subsequent period, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus, till every head was bald and every shoulder was peeled; yet had he no wages nor his army for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it.

The vision of the prophet 'tarried,' but did not fail. It reached, with equal clearness, throughout all future ages. And the time is not yet come respecting which Tyre is finally spoken of in the word of the Lord. But from the height of its dignity, to the depth of its debasement, a 'fragment' of the book of the prophetic scriptures marked out its fate. The confederate Greeks, under their 'great king,' came up against Tyrus, at an interval of two hundred and seventy years, after its siege by Nebuchadnezzar. And restricting the illustration of the prophecies to recorded and indisputable facts, which are notorious in history, the most unexceptionable testimony is supplied by Arrian and Quintus Curtius, whose names are associated with the history of Alexander and the siege of Tyre,[1] as those of Herodotus and Xenophon with that of Cyrus and the capture of Babylon.

One of the most singular events in history was the manner in which the siege of Tyre was conducted by Alexander the Great. Irritated that a single city should alone oppose his victorious march, enraged at the murder of some of his soldiers, and fearful for his fame—even his army's despairing of success could not deter him from the siege. And Tyre was taken in a manner, the success of which was more wonderful than the design was daring: for it was surrounded by a wall one hundred and fifty feet in height, and situated on an island half a mile distant from the shore. A mound was formed from the continent to the island; and the ruins of old Tyre,[2] afforded ready materials for the pur-

[1] See Prideaux, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c., on the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning Tyre.

[2] "Magna vis saxorum ad manum erat, Tyro vetere præbente." (Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. ix.)—See Prideaux, Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

pose. Such was the work, that the attempt at first defeated the power of an Alexander. The enemy consumed and the storm destroyed it. But its remains, buried beneath the water, formed a barrier which rendered successful his renewed efforts. A vast mass of additional matter was requisite. The soil and the very rubbish were gathered and heaped. And the mighty conqueror, who afterwards failed in raising again any of the ruins of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and took her very DUST[1] from off her. He left not the remnant of a ruin; and the site of *ancient* Tyre is now unknown.[2] Who then taught the prophets to say of Tyre—"*They shall lay thy stones and thy timber, and thy dust, in the midst of the water. I will also* SCRAPE HER DUST *from her. I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more. Thou shalt be sought for, yet thou shalt never be found again.*"[3]

After the capture of Tyre, the conqueror ordered it to be set on fire. Fifteen thousand of the Tyrians escaped in ships. And exclusive of multitudes that were cruelly slain, thirty thousand were sold into slavery.[4] Each of these facts had been announced for centuries:—"*Behold the Lord will cast her out; he will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire.—I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee; I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth. Pass ye over to Tarshish; pass over to Chittim. The isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.—Thou shalt die the death of them that are slain in the midst of the sea. The children of Israel also, and the children of Judah have ye sold. I will return the recompense upon your own head.*"

But it was also prophesied of the greatest commercial city of the world, whose merchants were princes;

1 "HUMUS aggerabatur." (Ibid. cap. xi.) The *soil* was heaped up.

2 Pococke's Description of the East, b. i. ch. xx. Bishop Newton; Volney's Travels, vol. ii.; Buckingham's Travels, p. 46.

3 Ezek. xxiv. 4, 12, 21.

4 Rollin, Bishop Newton, &c.

whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth: "*I will make thee like the top of a rock. Thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon.*"[1] The same prediction is repeated with an assurance of its truth—"*I will make her like the top of a rock; it shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it.*"[2]

Tyre, though deprived of its former inhabitants, soon revived as a city, and greatly regained its commerce. It was populous and flourishing at the beginning of the Christian era. It contained many disciples of Jesus, in the days of the apostles. An elegant temple and many churches were afterwards built there. It was the see of the first archbishop under the patriarch of Jerusalem. Her merchandise and her hire, according to the prophecy, were holiness to the Lord. In the seventh century Tyre was taken by the Saracens; in the twelfth by the Crusaders, at which period it was a great commercial city. The Mamelukes succeeded as its masters; and it remained for three hundred years in the possession of the Turks. But it was not excluded from among the multitude of cities and of countries whose ruin and devastation, as accomplished by the cruelties and ravages of Turkish barbarity and despotism, were foretold nearly two thousand years before the existence of that nation of plunderers. And although it has more lately by a brief respite from the greatest oppression, risen somewhat from its ruins, the last of the predictions respecting it has been literally fulfilled, according to the testimony of many witnesses. But that of Maundrell, Shaw, Volney, and Bruce, may suffice.

"You find here no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times. You see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by divine providence, as a visible argument how

[1] Ezek. xxiv. 14. [2] Ezek. xxiv. 4, 5.

God hath fulfilled his word concerning Tyre."[1] "The port of Tyre, small as it is at present, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of those fishermen who now and then visit this once renowned emporium, and dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins, can with great difficulty only be admitted."[2] And even Volney, after quoting the description of the greatness of Tyre, and the general description of the destruction of the city, and the annihilation of its commerce, acknowledges that "the vicissitudes of time, or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the Lower Empire and the Mahometans, have accomplished this prediction. Instead of that ancient commerce, so active and so extensive, Sour, (Tyre,) reduced to a miserable village, has no other trade than the exportation of a few sacks of corn and raw cotton: nor any merchant but a single Greek factor, in the service of the French of Saide, who scarcely makes sufficient profit to maintain his family." But though he overlooks the fulfilment of minuter prophecies, he relates facts more valuable than any opinion, and more corroborative of their truth:—"The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a *trifling fishery*. The houses they occupy are no longer, as in the time of Strabo, edifices of three or four stories high; but wretched huts, ready to crumble into ruins."[3] Bruce describes Tyre as "a rock whereon fishers dry their nets."

It matters not by what means these prophecies have been verified; for the means were as inscrutable, and as impossible to have been foreseen by man, as the event. The fact is beyond a doubt that they have been literally fulfilled, and therefore the PROPHECIES ARE TRUE. They may be overlooked, but no ingenuity can pervert them.

[1] Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 82; Prideaux, Lowth, Univ. Hist., Bp. Newton.
[2] Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 31; Bp. Newton, &c.
[3] Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 212.

No facts could have been more unlikely or striking, and no predictions respecting them could have been more clear.

EGYPT.

Egypt was one of the most ancient and one of the mightiest of kingdoms, and the researches of the traveller are still directed to explore the unparalleled memorials of its power. No nation, whether of ancient or of modern times, has ever erected such great and durable monuments. While the vestiges of other ancient monarchies can hardly be found amidst the mouldered ruins of their cities, those artificial mountains, visible at the distance of thirty miles, the pyramids of Egypt, without a record of their date, have withstood, unimpaired, all the ravages of time. The dynasty of Egypt takes precedence, in antiquity, of every other. No country ever produced so long a catalogue of kings. The learning of the Egyptians was proverbial. The number of their cities,[1] and the population of their country, as recorded by ancient historians, almost surpass credibility. Nature and art united in rendering it a most fertile region. It was called the granary of the world. It was divided into several kingdoms, and their power often extended over many of the surrounding countries.[2] Yet the knowledge of all its greatness and glory deterred not the Jewish prophets from declaring that Egypt shall become *a base kingdom, and never exalt itself any more above the nations*. And the *literal* fulfilment of every prophecy affords as clear a demonstration as can possibly be given, that each and all of them are the dictates of inspiration.

Egypt was the theme of many prophecies, which were fulfilled in ancient times; and it bears to the present

[1] Twenty thousand. (Herod. lib. ii. cap. clxxvii.)
[2] Marshami Can. Chron. pp. 239, 242.

day, as it has borne throughout many ages, every mark with which prophecy had stamped its destiny:—

"They shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of kingdoms. Neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.[1] The pride of her power shall come down. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. I will make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full. I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked. I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."[2]

Egypt became entirely subject to the Persians about three hundred and fifty years previous to the Christian era. It was afterwards subdued by the Macedonians, and was governed by the Ptolemies for the space of two hundred and ninety-four years, until, about thirty years before Christ, it became a province of the Roman empire. It continued long in subjection to the Romans, tributary first to Rome, and afterwards to Constantinople. It was transferred, A. D. 641, to the dominion of the Saracens. In 1250 the Mamelukes deposed their rulers, and usurped the command of Egypt. A mode of government the most singular and surprising that ever existed on earth, was established and maintained. Each successive ruler was raised to supreme authority from being a *stranger* and a slave: no son of the former ruler, no native of Egypt succeeding to the sovereignty; but a chief was chosen from among a new race of imported slaves. When Egypt became tributary to the Turks in 1517, the Mamelukes retained much of their power, and every pasha was an oppressor and a stranger. During all these ages, every attempt to emancipate the country, or to create a prince of the land of Egypt, has proved

[1] Ezek. xxix. 14, 15.
[2] Ezek. xxx. 6, 7, 12, 13, xxxii. 15.

abortive, and has often been fatal to the aspirant Though the facts relative to Egypt form too prominent a feature in the history of the world to admit of contradiction or doubt, yet the description of the fate of that country, and of the form of its government, shall be left to the testimony of those whose authority no infidel will question, and whom no man can accuse of adapting their descriptions to the predictions of the event. Gibbon and Volney are again our witnesses of the facts.

"Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power, and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. They are replaced by slaves *brought from their original country*. The system of oppression is methodical. Every thing the traveller sees or hears reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny."[1] "A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of *strangers* and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four-and-twenty beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants."[2] These are the words of Volney and of Gibbon; and what did the ancient prophets foretel? "*I will lay the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hands of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt. The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.*" The prophecy

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. i. pp. 74, 103, 110, 198.
[2] Gibbon's History, vol. xi. c. lix. p. 164.

adds: "*They shall be a base kingdom; it shall be the basest of kingdoms.*" After the lapse of two thousand and four hundred years from the date of this prophecy, a scoffer at religion, but an eye-witness of the facts, thus describes the self-same spot:—"In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, landholders. A universal air of misery, manifest in all the traveller meets, points out to him the rapacity of oppression and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils, or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intestine troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders. Justice herself puts to death without formality."[1] Other travellers describe the most execrable vices as common, and represent the moral character of the people as corrupted to the core. As a token of the desolation of the country, mud-walled cottages are now the only habitations where the ruins of temples and palaces abound. Egypt is surrounded by the dominions of the Turks and of the Arabs; and the prophecy is literally true which marked it in the midst of desolation:—"*They shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.*" The systematic oppression, extortion, and plunder, which have so long prevailed, and the price paid for his authority and power by every Turkish pasha, have rendered the country *destitute of that whereof it was full*, and still show both how *it has been wasted by the hands of strangers*, and how *it has been sold into the hand of the wicked.*

The waters shall fail from the sea, and the rivers shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away, and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every

[1] Volney's Travels, vol. i. pp. 190, 198.

thing sown by the brooks shall wither, and be driven away, and shall not be,[1] &c. *I will make the rivers dry,—and I will make the land waste,*[2] &c. Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitudes: Whom art thou like in thy greatness? The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high, with her rivers running about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches; for his root was by the great waters, &c. I have driven him out for his wickedness. Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh, and all his multitudes, saith the Lord God.[3]

The turning far away of the rivers, or of the ancient branches of the Nile from their course, and the drying up of the canals, and consequent emptying of the brooks, which spread fecundity over Egypt, may be ranked among the immediate and most influential causes of the desolation which has spread over the far greater part of Egypt. Wherever, on the banks of the Nile, irrigation is practised, and the little rivers run about the plants, and are sent out unto all the trees of the field, the wonderful luxuriance of the irrigation may well astonish a European; and the sickly green-house plants of our cold and comparatively sunless clime, assume a gigantic form. And partial and narrow as these rich fringes now are, advancing hills of sand (through the sloping sides of which the stems, and upper branches, and topmost twigs of trees buried, or being buried, may be seen as marking the progress of yet unstayed desolation) in some places, as at Rosetta, threaten destruction, like that of the felon condemned to stand on the brink of the rising tide. But over great part of Egypt desolation has done its perfect work. The streams of the Nile are now circumscribed

[1] Isa. xix. 5—7. [2] Ezek. xxx. 12. [3] Ezek. xxx.

within narrow limits to what formerly they were. On the western side of Egypt, as seen in Heath's plan of Egypt, an "ancient bed of the river Nile, now dry, and called by the natives Bellomah," is distant eighty miles from the nearest branch of that river. The intermediate space, of greater length than breadth, is marked as "immense sandy plains;" and a long canal which partly intersected it, is now "dry, except at the time of the inundation." Along the sea-coast the land is level and destitute of trees. And on the eastern side of Egypt, "the Pelusian branch of the Nile is choked up," and the plain in which it flowed, except in a few stagnant pools, is undistinguished from the sandy desert which now surrounds it on every side. In the intermediate space, and even within the far narrower limits now occupied by the stream of the Nile, the dry lines of rivers and canals are to be seen, and the desert covers many extensive regions which once raised Egypt among the chief of the kingdoms. With the exception of the environs of Rosetta and Damietta, and of a few miserable villages, in traversing the once rich Delta of Egypt from one side to another, the traveller, as the writer witnessed, passes through a desert; and where streams once ran about the plants, and the little rivers were sent out among the trees of the field, water-skins are a necessary equipage of a traveller, and can only be filled anew, after a journey of eight or ten hours, or of a longer period, and sometimes, too, at an unwholesome stagnant well, of the like of which the cattle in this country would not drink. Assuredly the desert has spread over a large portion of the once fertile land of Egypt. *The land is waste*, and *every thing is withered*, where *the rivers have been turned far away, and the brooks are emptied and dried up.*

The most recent travellers in Egypt, as in other countries, now see and acknowledge the marvellous fulfilment of the prophecies.

"Long," says Lord Lindsay, "did we gaze on the scene around and below us, (temple of Carnac at Thebes) —utter, awful desolation! Truly, indeed, has No been

'rent asunder.' The towers of the second, or eastern propylon are mere heaps of stones, 'poured down,'—as prophecy and modern travellers describe the foundations of Samaria—into the court on one side, and the great hall on the other; giant columns have been swept away like reeds before the mighty avalanche," &c.——"Returning to the great obelisk, and seating myself on the broken shaft of its prostrate companion, I spent some delightful moments in musing over the scene of ruins scattered around me, so visibly smitten by the hand of God, in fulfilment of the prophecies that describe No-Ammon as the scene of desolation I then beheld her. The hand of the true Jove Ammon, El-Amunah, the God of Truth, has indeed 'executed judgments on all the gods of Egypt,' but especially on his spurious representative, the idol of this most stupendous of earthly temples; silence reigns in its courts; the 'multitude of No' has been cut off; Pathros is 'desolate;'—the land of Ham is still the basest of kingdoms:—so sure is the word of prophecy, so visible its accomplishment."——"We have spent the whole day in visiting the site of Memphis and the pyramids of Dashour and Sacara. Mounds and embankments, a few broken stones, and two colossal statues, disinterred a few years ago by our friend Caviglia, are the solitary remains of the ancient capital of Lower Egypt. We rode for miles through groves of palm and acacia, cultivated fields, and wastes of sand, over what we knew must be the site of Memphis, but every other vestige of her ancient grandeur has disappeared. Noph is indeed 'waste and desolate.'"[1]

"*Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph. And I will make Pathros desolate, and I will set fire in Zoan* (marg. Sanis), *and I will execute judgments in No, and I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily. The*

[1] Lord Lindsay's Travels, vol. i. pp. 185—189.

young men of Avon (Heliopolis), *and of Pi-beseth* (Pelusium), *shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt; and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her.—Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt; and they shall know that I am the Lord.*"[1]

Though Herodotus numbered the cities of Egypt by thousands, yet all those which existed in the days of the prophets have long been in ruins. Egypt, of old exceedingly rich and populous, is now, except where still partially watered by the Nile and cultivated, bare and depopulated. Its two great cities, Cairo and Alexandria, are bordered by the desert. And with the exception of Rosetta and Damietta, and a few miserable villages, not a single town is to be met with, in traversing Lower Egypt from Alexandria to El Arish, or from one extremity to the other. Thebes, once famed for its hundred gates, may be called, from the magnificence of its remains, the metropolis of ruins. The mummies, so abundant at Memphis, remain, though the city has perished; and the human forms which once peopled it, have retained their perfect structure long after its palaces and temples have mouldered into indistinguishable heaps. Heliopolis has now a single erect obelisk to tell that the mounds around it were once the 'city of the sun.' A single street, with its central square, of the city of Alexandria, built after the era of the prophets, occupied a greater space than the modern city.[2] "At Bubastis, now Tel Basta, the Pi-beseth of Scripture, are lofty mounds, and some remains of the ancient city of Pasht. Many other mounds, in various parts of the Delta, mark the sites of ancient towns."[3] The author, in hastily passing through Egypt, heard of ruins in various directions, and passed over those of Zoan,[4] of which, besides the general deso-

[1] Ezek. xxx. 12—19. [2] See Heath's Plan of Alexandria.
[3] Wilkinson's Thebes, p. 347.
[4] Arriving late in the day at San (Zoan) my friend the Rev. Andrew Bonar first directed my attention to these ruins.

lation that was to come on the cities of Egypt, the prophet said, *I will set a fire in Zoan.* As the Lord wrought wonders of old in the fields of Zoan, so that city (the locality of which is undoubted) now bears in its ruins the proof of its ancient greatness, and the marks of its prophetic fate. The remains of Zoan being little known, as only partially described by travellers, may be more particularly noticed.

San, or, as pronounced by the Arabs on the spot, Zaan, a small fishing village, built of mud and brick, some of the dwellings consisting of the former and some of the latter, is the only representative of this seat of Pharaoh's glory. In its immediate vicinity, but raised considerably above the plain, are the ruins of the ancient city. These, in general, where not buried under sand, consist of large heaps of débris, formed of earth, broken bricks, and tiles in great abundance. The chief remains, all fallen, and lying almost in straight lines, seem to have belonged to the same range of grand and public edifices. On the remote extremity from the village, high sandy mounds render any ruins or buildings invisible, if ever, as in all likelihood, they have existed there. Two fragments of obelisks, the one twenty-seven, the other sixteen feet long, first appear above the sand. At the distance of sixty yards, upwards of twenty large blocks of granite, evidently some portion of an ancient building, lie on the ground, and nearly the same number at a farther similar distance. Besides these last, there are broken fragments of obelisks, covered with rubbish, and a stone figure or image, in a sitting position, eleven feet in height, resting on a block five feet high, and four broad, but lying nearly horizontally, with head inclined downwards, as if licking the dust. About thirty-six yards farther on, in the same direction, are three broken obelisks, of one of which, the top or upper part, which has been broken off, is twenty-four feet long, lying horizontally, while the lower part, in two other fragments, dips obliquely into the sand. The second obelisk, lying near it, is hid at both extremities, and broken in the middle: though

above thirty feet long, it is evident that only a portion of it is seen, the narrowest part of which that is visible, is four feet in diameter. The third is evidently in an unfinished state. And this is a token, among other proofs, that the Lord has been a swift messenger against Egypt, and that his judgments have come upon it suddenly. At a farther distance of fifty yards, two other obelisks lie contiguous; and at a little distance from these, in a single spot, from seventy to eighty largest ones or blocks of granite are crowded together, (some of them six feet by four,) most of which are partly hid in the ground, and some scattered around. Fragments of ruins lie over a large extent, and among these many vitrified pieces, larger than those on Gaza, are to be found, clearly indicating that the Lord hath set fire in Zoan.

Can any words be more free from ambiguity, or could any events be more wonderful in their nature, or more unlikely or impossible to have been foreseen by man, than these prophecies concerning Egypt? The long line of its kings commenced with the first ages of the world, and, while it was yet unbroken, its final termination was revealed. The very attempt once made by infidels to show, from the recorded number of its monarchs and the duration of their reigns, that Egypt was a kingdom previous to the Mosaic era of the deluge, places the wonderful nature of these predictions respecting it in the most striking view. And the previous experience of two thousand years, during which period Egypt had never been without a prince of its own, seemed to preclude the possibility of those predicted events which the experience of the last two thousand years has amply verified. Though it had often tyrannized over Judea and the neighbouring nations, the Jewish prophets foretold that its own sceptre should depart away; and that that country of kings (for the numbers of its contemporary as well as successive monarchs may warrant the appellation) would never have a prince of its own; and that it would be laid waste by the hands of strangers. They foretold that it should be a base kingdom, the

basest of kingdoms; that it should be desolate itself, and surrounded by desolation; and that it should never exalt itself any more above the nations. They describe its ignominious subjection and unparalleled baseness, notwithstanding that its past and present degeneracy bears not a more remote resemblance to the former greatness and pride of its power than the frailty of its mud-walled fabrics now bears to the stability of its imperishable pyramids. Such prophecies, accomplished in such a manner, prove, without a comment, that they must be the revelation of the omniscient Ruler of the universe.[1]

On a review of the prophecies relative to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, may we not, by the plainest induction from indisputable facts, conclude that the fate of these cities and countries, as well as of the land of Judea and the adjoining territories, demonstrates the truth of all the prophecies respecting them? and that these prophecies, ratified by the events, give the most powerful of testimonies to the truth of the Christian religion? The desolation was the work of man, and was effected by the enemies of Christianity; and would have been the same as it is, though not a single prophecy had been uttered. It is the prediction of these facts, in all

[1] Egypt has, indeed, lately risen, under its present spirited but despotic pasha, who is both an *oppressor* and a *stranger*, to a degree of political importance and power unknown to it for many past centuries. Yet this fact, instead of militating against the truth of prophecy, may, possibly at no distant period, serve to illustrate another prediction, which implies that, however base and degraded it might continue to be throughout many generations, it would, notwithstanding, have strength sufficient to be looked to for aid or protection, even at the time of the restoration of the Jews to Judea, who will seek "to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trust in the shadow of Egypt." Other prophecies respecting it await their fulfilment. Yet, whatever its present apparent strength may be, it is still but "the shadow of Egypt." (Isa. xxx. 2, xxxi. 1.) The whole earth shall yet rejoice; and Egypt shall not be for ever *base*. *The Lord shall smite Egypt; he shall smite and heal it; and they shall return to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. And in that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land,* &c. (Isa. xix. 19—25.)

their particulars, infinitely surpassing human foresight, which is the work of God alone. And the *ruin of these empires*, while it substantiates the truth of every iota of these predictions, is thus a miraculous confirmation and proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. By what fatality is it, then, that infidels should have chosen for the display of their power this very field, where, without conjuring, as they have done, a lying spirit from the ruins, they might have read the fulfilment of the prophecies on every spot? Instead of disproving the truth of every religion, the greater these ruins are, the more strongly do they authenticate the scriptural prophecies; and it is not, at least, on this stronghold of faith that the standard of infidelity can be erected. Every fact related by Volney is a witness against all his speculation; and out of his own mouth is he condemned. Can any purposed deception be more glaring or great, than to overlook all these prophecies, and to raise an argument against the truth of Christianity from the very facts by which they have been fulfilled? Or can any evidence of divine inspiration be more convincing and clear than to view, in conjunction, all these marvellous predictions, and their exact completion?

CHAPTER VII.

THE ARABS.

THE history of the Arabs, so opposite in many respects to that of the Jews, but as singular as theirs, was concisely and clearly foretold. It was prophesied concerning Ishmael:—"He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand will be against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. I will make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly; and I will make him a great nation."[1] The fate of Ishmael is here identified with that of his descendants; and the same character is common to them both. The historical evidence of the fact, the universal tradition, and constant boast of the Arabs themselves, their language, and the preservation for many ages of an original rite, derived from him as their primogenitor, confirm the truth of their descent from Ishmael. The fulfilment of the prediction is obvious. Even Gibbon, while he attempts from the exceptions which he specifies to evade the force of the fact, that the Arabs have maintained a perpetual independence, acknowledges that these exceptions are temporary and local; that the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; and that "the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia."[2] But even the exceptions which he specifies, though they were justly stated, and though not coupled with such admissions as invalidate them, would not detract from the truth of the prophecy. The independence of the Arabs was proverbial in ancient as well as in modern times; and the present existence, as a free and independent nation, of a people who derive their

[1] Genesis xvi. 12; xvii. 20.
[2] Gibbon's Hist. vol. ix. c. l. p. 230.

descent from so high antiquity, demonstrates that they have never been wholly subdued, as all the nations around them have unquestionably been; and that they have ever dwelt in the presence of their brethren. They not only subsist unconquered to this day, but the prophesied and primitive wildness of their race, and their hostility to all, remained unsubdued and unaltered. "*They are a wild people; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them.*" In the words of Gibbon, which strikingly assimilate with those of the prophecy, they are "*armed against mankind.*" Plundering is their profession. Their alliance is never courted, and can never be obtained; and all that the Turks, or Persians, or any of their neighbours, can stipulate for from them, is a partial and purchased forbearance. Even the British, who have established a residence in almost every country, have entered the territories of the descendants of Ishmael to accomplish only the premeditated destruction of a fort, and to retire. It cannot be alleged, with truth, that their peculiar character and manner, and its uninterrupted permanency, are the necessary results of the nature of their country. They have continued wild and uncivilized, and have retained their habits of hostility towards all the rest of the human race, though they possessed for three hundred years countries the most opposite in their nature from the mountains of Arabia. The greatest part of the temperate zone was included within the limits of the Arabian conquests; and their empire extended from the confines of India to the shores of the Atlantic,[1] and embraced a wider range of territory than ever was possessed by the Romans, those boasted masters of the world. The period of their conquest and dominion was sufficient, under such circumstances, to have changed the manners of any people: but, whether in the land of Shinar or in the valleys of Spain, on the banks of the Tigris or the Tagus, in Araby the blessed or Araby the barren, the posterity of Ishmael have ever maintained their prophetic character;

[1] Gibbon, vol. ix. c. li. p. 501, vol. x. c. lii. p. 2.

they have remained, under every change of condition, a wild people; their hand has still been against every man, and every man's hand against them.

The natural reflection of a recent traveller, on examining the peculiarities of an Arab tribe, of which he was an eye-witness, may suffice, without any art of controversy, for the illustration of this prophecy:—"On the smallest computation, such must have been the manners of those people for more than three thousand years: thus in all things verifying the prediction given of Ishmael at his birth, that he, in his posterity, should be a wild man, and always continue to be so, though they shall dwell for ever in the presence of their brethren. And that an acute and active people, surrounded for ages by polished and luxurious nations, should, from their earliest to their latest times, be still found a wild people, dwelling in the presence of all their brethren, (as we may call those nations,) unsubdued and unchangeable, is indeed a standing miracle; one of those mysterious facts which establish the truth of prophecy."[1]

Recent discoveries have brought to light the miraculous preservation and existence, as a distinct people, of a less numerous, but not less interesting race; "a plant which grew up under the mighty cedar of Israel, but was destined to flourish when that proud tree was levelled to the earth."[2] "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever."[3] The Rechabites still exist, a "distinct and easily distinguishable" people. They boast of their descent from Rechab, profess pure Judaism, and all know Hebrew. Yet they live in the neighbourhood of Mecca, the chief seat of Mahometanism, and their number is stated to be sixty thousand. The account given of them by Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century,[4] has very recently been confirmed by Mr. Wolff; and, as he witnessed, and

[1] Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, p. 304.
[2] Quarterly Review, Num. lxxv. p. 142.
[3] Jer. xxxv. 19.
[4] Basnage's History, p. 620.

heard from an intrepid "Rechabite cavalier," there is not a man wanting to stand up as a son of Rechab.[1]

SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS—EUROPEAN COLONIES IN ASIA.

Not only do the different countries and cities, which form the subjects of prophecy, exhibit to this day their predicted fate, but there is also a prophecy recorded as delivered in an age coeval with the deluge, when the members of a single family included the whole of the human race, the fulfilment of which is conspicuous even at the present time. And while the fate of the Jews and of the Arabs, throughout many ages, has confirmed, in every instance in which the period of their prediction is already past, the prophecies relative to the descendants of Isaac and of Ishmael; existing facts, which are prominent features in the history of the world, are equally corroborative of the predictions respecting the sons of Noah. The unnatural conduct of Ham, and the dutiful and respectful behaviour of Shem and Japheth towards their aged father, gave rise to the prediction of the future fate of their posterity, without being at all assigned as the cause of that fate. But whatever was the occasion on which it was delivered, the truth of the prophecy must be tried by its completion:—"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."[2]

The historical part of Scripture, by its describing so particularly the respective settlements of the descendants of Noah, "after their generations in their nations,"

[1] See Wolff's Journal, (1828,) vol. ii. pp. 276, 331—336.
[2] Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27.

affords, to this day, the means of trying the truth of the prediction, and of ascertaining whether the prophetic character, as given by the patriarch of the postdiluvian world, be still applicable to the inhabitants of the different regions of the earth which were peopled by the posterity of Shem, of Ham, and of Japheth. The *isles of the gentiles*,[1] or the countries beyond the Mediterranean, to which they passed by sea, viz. those of Europe, were divided by the sons of Japheth. The descendants of Ham inhabited Africa and the south-western parts of Asia.[2] *The families of the Canaanites were spread abroad. The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon.*[3] The city of Tyre was called the daughter of Sidon; and Carthage, the most celebrated city of Africa, was peopled from Tyre. And the dwellings of the sons of Shem were *unto the east*,[4] or Asia. The particular allotment, or portion of each, "after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations,"[5] is distinctly specified. And although the different nations descended from any one of the sons of Noah, have intermingled with each other, and undergone many revolutions, yet the three great divisions of the world have remained distinct, as separately peopled and possessed by the posterity of each of the sons of Noah. On this subject the earliest commentators are agreed, before the existence of those facts which give to the prophecy its fullest illustration. The facts themselves, by which the prediction is verified, are so notorious and so applicable, that the most brief and simple statement may suffice. Before the propagation of Christianity, which first spoke peace to earth, taught a law of universal love, and called all men brethren, slavery everywhere prevailed, and the greater part of the human race, throughout all the world, were born to slavery, and unredeemed for life. Man can now boast of a nobler birthright. But, though long banished from almost all Europe, slavery still lingers in Africa. That country is distinguished above every other

[1] Gen. x. 5. [2] Ibid. [3] Gen. x. 6, 18, 19. [4] Gen. x. 30.
[5] Gen. x. 31, 32.—See Mede, Dic. L. p. 277, &c.

as the land of slavery. Slaves at home, and transported for slavery, the poor Africans, the descendants of Ham, are the servants of servants, or slaves to others. Yet so unlikely was this fact to have been foreseen by man, that, for centuries after the close of the Old Testament history, the inhabitants of Africa disputed with the Romans the empire of the world. But Hannibal, who was once almost master of Rome and of Europe, was forced to yield to and to own the fate of Carthage.[1]

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." Some of the ablest interpreters of prophecy, of a former age, conceived that this prediction was fulfilled, not only by the conquests which the Macedonians and the Romans obtained over many of the countries of Asia, but that the promise or blessing of enlargement to Japheth was also verified in a metaphorical sense, by the extension of the knowledge of true religion to the nations of Europe. But it stands not now in need of any questionable interpretation, having received a literal accomplishment. What is at present the relative situation or connection of the inhabitants of Europe and of Asia, the descendants of Japheth and of Shem? May not the former be said literally to dwell in the tents of the latter? Or what simile, drawn from the simplicity of primeval ages, could be more strikingly graphic of the numerous and extensive European colonies in Asia? And how much have the posterity of Japheth been enlarged within the regions of the posterity of Shem? In how many of their ancient cities do they dwell? How many settlements have they established? —while there is not a single spot in Europe the colony or the property of any of the nations whom the Scriptures represent as descended from Shem, or who inhabit any part of that quarter of the world which they possessed. And it may be said, in reference to England, and to the immense extent of the British Asiatic dominions, that the natives *of the isles of the gentiles dwell in the tents of the east!* From whence, then, could

[1] Livii Hist. lib. xxvii. c. 51; Mede, ibid.

such a prophecy have emanated, but from inspiration by Him whose presence and whose prescience are alike unlimited by space or by time?

Whatever events the prophecies reveal, they never sanction any iniquity or evil. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, though it be made to praise him. And any defence or attempted justification of slavery, or of man having any moral right of property in man, must be sought in vain from the fulfilment of this prediction. Nebuchadnezzar was the guilty instrument of righteous judgments; and although in the execution of these he was the servant of the Lord, it was his own gain and glory which he sought, and after having subdued nations not a few, he was driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beasts. Never were judgments more clearly marked than those which have rested on the Jews in every country under heaven. Yet he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye: and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion shall be the day of the Lord's vengeance, when he will plead with all flesh for his people and for his heritage. And if these examples suffice not to show that it is a wresting of Scripture to their destruction, for any to seek from them the vindication of slavery, because Canaan was to be the servant of servants unto his brethren, yet they who profess to look here to the *holy* Scriptures for a warrant, because that fact was foretold, should remember, that though Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies, "by the *determinate counsel and foreknowledge* of God, it was by *wicked hands* that he was crucified and slain." God hath made of one flesh all the nations of the earth. And, were the gospel universally and rightly appealed to, no other bond would be known among men but that of Christian brotherhood.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

INCOMPLETE as has been the view given in the foregoing pages of the Evidence of Prophecy, yet do not the joint clearness of the prophecies themselves, and the profusion of precise facts which show their literal fulfilment, bid defiance to the most subtle skeptic to forge or feign the shadow of a just reason to prove how they could all have been spoken, except by inspiration of God? The sure word of prophecy has indeed unfolded many a desolation which has come upon the earth; but while it thus reveals the operation, in some of its bearings, of the "mystery of iniquity," it forms itself a part of the "mystery of godliness:" and it is no less the testimony of Jesus, because it shows, as far as earthly ruins can reveal, the progress and the issue of the dominion of "other lords" over the hearts of the children of men. The sins of men have caused, and the cruelty of men has effected the dire desolations which the word of God foretold. Signs and tokens of his judgments there indeed have been, but they are never to be found but where iniquity first prevailed. And though all other warnings were to fail, the sight of his past judgments, and the sounding of those that are to come, might teach the unrepenting and unconverted sinner to give heed to the threatenings of his word and to the terrors of the Lord, and to try his ways and turn unto God, while space for repentance may be found, ere, as death leaves him, judgment shall find him. And may not the desolations which God has wrought upon the earth, and that accredit his word, wherein life and immortality are

brought to light, teach the man whose God is the world, to cease to account it worthy of his worship and of his love, and to abjure that "covetousness, which is idolatry," till the idol of mammon in the temple within shall fall, as fell the image of Dagon before the ark of the Lord, in which "the testimony" was kept?

But naming, as millions do, the name of Christ, without departing from iniquity, there is another warning voice that may come more closely to them all. And it is not only from the desolate regions where heathens dwelt, which show how holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but also from the ruins of some of the cities where churches were formed by apostles, and where the religion of Jesus once existed in its purity, that all may learn to know that God is no respecter of persons, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

What church could rightfully claim or ever seek a higher title than that which is given in Scripture to the seven churches of Asia, the angels of which were the seven stars in the right hand of Him who is the first and the last, of Him that liveth and was dead and is alive for evermore, and that hath the keys of hell and of death; and which themselves were the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which HE walked? And who that hath an ear to hear, may not humbly hear and greatly profit by what the Spirit said unto them.[1]

The CHURCH OF EPHESUS, after a commendation of their first works, to which they were commanded to return, were accused of having left their first love, and threatened with the removal of their candlestick out of its place, except they should repent.[2] Ephesus is situated nearly fifty miles south of Smyrna. It was the metropolis of Ionia, and a great and opulent city, and (according to Strabo) the greatest emporium of Asia Minor. It was chiefly famous for the temple of Diana, "whom all Asia worshipped," which was adorned with one hundred

[1] Rev. ii. and iii. [2] Rev. ii. 5.

and twenty-seven columns of Parian marble, each of a single shaft, and sixty feet high, and which formed one of the seven wonders of the world. The remains of its magnificent theatre, in which it is said that twenty thousand people could easily have been seated, are yet to be seen.[1] But "a few heaps of stones, and some miserable mud cottages, occasionally tenanted by Turks, without one Christian residing there, are all the remains of ancient Ephesus."[2] It is, as described by different travellers, a solemn and most forlorn spot. The epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world: but there is none in Ephesus to read it now. They left their first love; they returned not to their first works. Their candlestick has been removed out of its place; and the great city of Ephesus is no more.

The Church of Smyrna was approved of as "rich," and no judgment was denounced against it. They were warned of a tribulation of ten days, (the ten years' persecution by Dioclesian,) and were enjoined to be faithful unto death, and they would receive a crown of life.[3] And, unlike to the fate of the more famous city of Ephesus, Smyrna is still a large city, containing nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants, with several Greek churches; and an English and other Christian ministers have resided in it. The light has indeed become dim, but the candlestick has not been wholly removed out of its place.

The Church of Pergamos is commended for holding fast the name of the Lord, and not denying his faith, during a time of persecution, and in the midst of a wicked city. But there were some in it who held doctrines, and did deeds, which the Lord hated. Against them He was to fight with the sword of his mouth; and all were called to repent. But it is not said, as of Ephesus, that their candlestick would be removed out of its place.[4] Pergamos is situated to the north of Smyrna, at a distance of nearly sixty-four miles, and "was formerly

[1] Acts xix. 29.
[2] Arundel's Visit to the Seven Churches of Asia, p. 27.
[3] Rev. ii. 8, 11.
[4] Rev. ii. 12—16.

the metropolis of Hellespontic Mysia." It still contains at least fifteen thousand inhabitants, of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians, each of whom has a church.

In the CHURCH OF THYATIRA, like that of Pergamos, some tares were soon mingled with the wheat. He who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire, discerned both. Yet happily for the souls of the people, more than for the safety of the city, the general character of that church, as it then existed, is thus described: "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."[1] But against those—for such there were among them, who had committed fornication, and eaten things sacrificed unto idols, to whom the Lord gave space to repent of their fornication, and they repented not—great tribulation was denounced; and to every one of them was to be given according to their works. These, thus warned while on earth in vain, have long since passed, whither all are daily hastening, to the place where no repentance can be found, and no work be done. "But unto the rest in Thyatira, (as many as have not known the depths of Satan,) I will put upon you, saith the Lord, none other burden."[2] There were those in Thyatira who could save a city. It still exists, while greater cities have fallen. Mr. Hartley, who visited it in 1826, describes it as "embosomed in cypresses and poplars." The Greeks are said to occupy three hundred houses, and the Armenians thirty. Each of them has a church.

The CHURCH OF SARDIS differed from the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira. They had not denied the faith; but the Lord had a few things against them, for there were some evil doers among them, and on those, if they repented not, judgment was to rest. But in Sardis, great though the city was, and founded though the church had been by an apostle, there were only a few names, which had not defiled their garments. And to that church the Spirit said, "I know thy works, that

[1] Rev. ii. 19. [2] Rev. ii. 24.

thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." But the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And the church of Sardis was thus warned: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee."[1] The state of Sardis now is a token that the warning was given in vain; and shows that the threatenings of the Lord, when disregarded, become certain judgments. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was a great and renowned city, where the wealth of Crœsus, its king, was accumulated, and became even a proverb. But now a few wretched mud huts, "scattered among the ruins," are the only dwellings in Sardis, and form the lowly home of Turkish herdsmen, who are its only inhabitants. As the seat of a Christian church, it has lost—all it had to lose—the name. "No Christians reside on the spot."

"And to the angel of the CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA write, These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world."[2] The promises of the Lord are as sure as his threatenings. Philadelphia alone long withstood the power of the Turks, and in the words of Gibbon, "at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia," he adds, "Philadelphia is still erect; a column in a scene of ruins."[3] "It is indeed an interesting cir-

[1] Rev. iii. 2, 3. [2] Rev. iii. 7, 8, 10.
[3] Gibbon, vol. xi. ch. lxiv. p. 427.

cumstance," says Mr. Hartley, "to find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish empire: there is still a numerous Christian population; they occupy three hundred houses. Divine service is performed every Sunday in five churches." Nor is it less interesting, in these eventful times, and notwithstanding the general degeneracy of the Greek church, to learn that the present bishop of Philadelphia accounts "the Bible the only foundation of all religious belief;" and that he admits that "abuses have entered into the church, which former ages might endure; but the present must put them down." It may well be added, as stated by Mr. Hartley,[1] "the circumstance that Philadelphia is now called Allah-Shehr, the city of God, when viewed in connection with the promises made to that church, and especially with that of writing the name of the city of God upon its faithful members, is, to say the least, a singular concurrence." From the prevailing iniquities of men many a sign has been given how terrible are the judgments of God. But from the fidelity of the church in Philadelphia of old in keeping his word, a name and memorial of his faithfulness have been left on earth, while the higher glories, promised to those that overcame, shall be ratified in heaven; and towards them, but not them only, shall the glorified Redeemer confirm the truth of his blessed words, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God;" even as assuredly as Philadelphia, when all else fell around it, "stood erect," our enemies themselves being judges, "a column in a scene of ruins."

"And unto the angel of the CHURCH OF THE LAODICEANS write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and

[1] Missionary Register, June, 1827.

knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see."[1] All the other churches were found worthy of some commendation; and there was some blessing in them all. The church of Ephesus had laboured and had not fainted, though she had forsaken her first love; and the threatened punishment, except she repented, was the removal of her candlestick out of its place. A faithless and wicked few polluted the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira by their doctrines or by their lives; but the body was sound, and the churches had a portion in Christ. Even in Sardis, though it was dead, there was life in a few, who had not defiled their garments; "and they shall walk with me in white," said the Lord, "for they are worthy."

But in what the Spirit said to the church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval: it was lukewarm, without exception; and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter. They would attend to it just as they did to other things, which they loved as well. The sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross was nothing thought of more than a common gift by man. They were not constrained by the love of Christ more than by other feelings. They could repeat the words of the first great commandment of the law, and of the second, which is like unto it; but they showed no sign that the one or the other was truly a law to them. There was no Dorcas among them, who, out of pure Christian love, made clothes for the poor. There was no Philemon to whom it could be said, "The church in thy house," and who could look on a Christian servant as a "brother beloved." There was no servant who looked to the eye of his Father in heaven more than to that of his master on earth, and to the recompense of eternal reward more than

[1] Rev. iii. 14—18

to the hireling wages of a day; and who, by showing all good fidelity, sought to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. There was nothing done as every thing should be, heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

They neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless than if they had been cold. For sooner would a man in Sardis have felt that the chill of death was upon him, and have cried out for life, and called to the physician, than would a man of Laodicea, who could calmly count his even pulse, and think his life secure, while death was preying on his vitals. The character of lukewarm Christians, a self-contradicting name, is the same in every age. Such was the church of the Laodiceans.—But what is that city now, or how is it changed from what it was!

Laodicea was the metropolis of the Greater Phrygia; and, as heathen writers attest, it was an extensive and very celebrated city. Instead of then verging to its decline, it arose to its eminence only about the beginning of the Christian era. "It was the mother-church of sixteen bishoprics." Its three theatres, and the immense circus, which was capable of containing upwards of thirty thousand spectators, the remains of which (with other ruins buried under ruins) are yet to be seen, give proof of the greatness of its ancient wealth and population, and indicate too strongly, that in the city where Christians were rebuked, without exception, for their lukewarmness, there were multitudes who were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The amphitheatre was built after the Apocalypse was written, and the warning of the Spirit had been given to the church of the Laodiceans to be zealous and repent; but whatever they there may have heard or beheld, their hearts would neither have been quickened to a renewed zeal for the service and glory of God, nor turned to a deeper sorrow for sin, and to a repentance not to be repented of. But the fate of Laodicea, though opposite, has been no less marked than that of Philadelphia. There are no sights of grandeur,

nor scenes of temptation around it now. Its own tragedy may be briefly told. It was lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, and therefore it was loathsome in the sight of God. It was loved, and rebuked, and chastened in vain. And it has been blotted from the world. It is now as desolate as its inhabitants were destitute of the fear and the love of God, and as the church of the Laodiceans was devoid of true faith in the Saviour, and zeal in his service. It is, as described in his Travels by Dr. Smith, "utterly desolated, and without any inhabitant, except wolves, and jackals, and foxes."[1] It can boast of no human inhabitants, except occasionally when wandering Turkomans pitch their tents in its spacious amphitheatre. The "finest sculptured fragments" are to be seen at a considerable depth, in excavations which have been made among the ruins.[2] And Colonel Leake observes,[3] "there are few ancient cities more likely than Laodicea to preserve many curious remains of antiquity beneath the surface of the soil; its opulence, and the earthquakes to which it was subject, rendering it probable that valuable works of art were often there buried beneath the ruins of the public and private edifices." A fearful significancy is thus given to the terrific denunciation, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Each church, and each individual therein was weighed in the balance of the sanctuary according to their works. Each was approved of according to its character, or rebuked and warned according to its deeds. Was the church itself pure, the diseased members alone were to be cut off. Was the church itself dead, yet the few names, in which there was life, were all written before God, and not one of those who overcame would be blotted out of the book

[1] See Smith's Survey of the Seven Churches in Calmet's Dict. Fragments, 328; Bishop Newton, &c.

[2] Arundel's Travels, p. 85.

[3] Journal, p. 252.

of life. All the seven churches were severally exhorted by the Spirit according to their need. The faith delivered to the saints was preached unto them all; and all, as Christian churches, possessed the means of salvation. The Son of man walked in the midst of them, beholding those who were, and those who were not his.

By the preaching of the gospel, and by the written word, every man in each of the churches was warned, and every man was taught in all wisdom, that every man might be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. And in what the Spirit said unto each and all of the churches, which he that hath ears to hear was commanded to hear, the promise of everlasting blessedness, under a variety of the most glorious representations, was given without exception, restriction, or reservation to him that overcometh. The language of love, as well as of remonstrance and rebuke, was urged even on the lukewarm Laodiceans. And if any Christian fell, it was from his own resisting and quenching the Spirit; from his choosing other lords than Jesus to have dominion over him; from his lukewarmness, deadness, and virtual denial of the faith; and from his own wilful rejection of freely offered and dearly purchased grace; sufficient, if sought and cherished, and zealously used, to have enabled him to overcome and triumph in that warfare against spiritual wickedness to which Christ hath called his disciples; and in which, as the finisher of their faith, he is able to make the Christian more than conqueror.

But if such, as the Spirit described them and knew them to be, were the churches and Christians then, what are the churches, and what are Christians now? Or, rather, we would ask of the reader, what is your own hope toward God, and what the work of your faith? If, while Christianity was in its prime, and when its divine truths had scarcely ceased to reach the ears of believers from the lips of Apostles, on whose heads the Spirit had visibly descended, and cloven tongues, like as of fire, had sat; if, even at that time, one of the seven churches of Asia had already departed from its first love; if two

others were partially polluted by the errors in doctrine, and evils in the practice, of some of their members; if another had only a few names that were worthy, and yet another none; and if they who formed the last and worst of these, thought themselves rich and increased with goods, and that they had need of nothing; and knew not, that, being lukewarm, they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; have you an ear to hear or a heart to understand such knowledge? and do you, professing yourself a Christian, as they also did, see no cause or warning here to question and examine yourself—even as the same Spirit would search and try you—of your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, and your works, and the last more than the first?

What is your labour of love, or wherein do you labour at all for his name's sake, by whose name you are called? What trials does your faith patiently endure, what temptations does it triumphantly overcome? Is Christ in you the hope of glory, and is your heart purified through that blessed hope? To a church, we trust, you belong: but whose is the kingdom within you? What principles ever actuate you which Christ and his Apostles taught? Where, in your affections and life, are the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance? Turn the precepts of the gospel into questions, and ask thus what the Spirit would say unto you, as he said unto the churches?

What the Spirit said unto primitive and apostolic churches, over which "the beloved disciple" personally presided, may suffice to prove that none who have left their first love, if ever they have truly felt the love of Jesus—that none who are guilty of seducing others into sin and uncleanness—that none who have a name that they live and are dead—and that none who are lukewarm, are worthy members of any Christian communion; and that, while such they continue, no Christian communion can be profitable to them. But unto them is "space to repent" given. And to them the word and Spirit speak

in entreaties, encouragements, exhortations, and warnings; that they may turn from their sins to the Saviour, and that they may live and not die. But were there one name in Sodom, or a few in Sardis, that are the Lord's, he knows and names them every one; and precious in his sight is the death of his saints. Some, on the other hand, may be sunk into the depths of Satan, though in outward fellowship with a church, were such to be found, as pure as once was that of Thyatira. Whatever, therefore, the profession of your faith may be, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; that kingdom which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that righteousness which is through faith in Christ, who gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. And whatever dangers may then encompass you around, fear not—only believe; all things are possible to him that believeth.

It was by keeping the word of the Lord, and not denying his faith, by hearing what the Spirit said, that the Church of Philadelphia held fast what they had, and no man took their crown, though situated directly between the church of Laodicea, which was lukewarm, and Sardis, which was dead. And dead as Sardis was, the Lord had a few names in it which had not defiled their garments—Christians, worthy of the name, who lived, as you yourself should ever live, in the faith of the Lord Jesus—dead unto sin, and alive unto righteousness: while all around them, though naming the name of Jesus, were dead in trespasses and sins. Try your faith by its fruits; judge yourselves, that you be not judged; examine yourselves whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves; and, with the whole counsel of God, as revealed in the gospel, open to your view, let the rule of your self-scrutiny be what the Spirit said unto the churches.

If you have seen any wonderful things out of the law of the Lord, and have looked, though from afar off, on the judgments of God that have come upon the earth, lay not aside the thought of these things when you now

lay down this little book. Treat them not as if they were an idle tale, or as if you yourself were not to be a witness—and more than a witness—of a far greater judgment which shall be brought nigh unto you, and shall be your own.

If, in traversing some of the plainest paths of the field of prophecy, you have been led by a way which you knew not of before, let that path lead you to the well of living waters, which springeth up into everlasting life to every one that thirsts after it and drinks. Let the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be to you this well-spring of the Christian life. Let the word of God enlighten your eyes, and it will also rejoice your heart. Search the Scriptures; in them are no lying divinations; they testify of Jesus, and in them you will find eternal life. Pray for the teaching and the aid of that Spirit by whose inspiration they were given. And above all Christian virtues that may bear witness of your faith, put on charity, love to God and love to man, the warp and woof of the Christian's new vesture without a seam; which is the fruit of the Spirit, the end of the commandment, the fulfilling of the law, the bond of perfectness, and a better gift, and a more excellent way than speaking with tongues, or interpreting or prophesying; and without which you would be as nothing, though you understood all mysteries and all knowledge. From the want of this the earth has been covered with ruins. Let it be yours, and however poor may be your earthly portion, it will be infinitely more profitable to you than all the kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. Prophecies shall fail; tongues shall cease; knowledge shall vanish away; the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up; but charity never faileth.

If you have kept the word of the Lord, and have not denied his name, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. But if heretofore you have been lukewarm, and destitute of Christian faith, and zeal, and hope, and love, it would be vain, in closing a chapter on such a subject, to leave you with any mortal

admonition; hear what the Spirit saith, and harden not your heart against the heavenly counsel, and the glorious encouragement given unto you by that Jesus, of whom all the prophets bear witness, and unto whom all things are now committed by the Father:—"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

CONCLUSION.

The whole of the preceding brief and imperfect sketch forms little else than an enumeration of some of the more striking prophecies, and of facts which demonstrate their fulfilment; and a recapitulation of all the particulars would be an unnecessary repetition. The numerous obscure prophecies, which contain much and striking evidence, have hitherto been omitted, that the charge of ambiguity, too generally and indiscriminately attached to them all, might be proved to be unfounded. But, having seen, in hundreds of instances, that prophecies which were plainly delivered, have been as clearly fulfilled, comprehending them all in a single argument, and leaving the decision to the enemies of Christianity, or to those who are weak in the faith, and appealing to their reason without bespeaking their favour

—may it not, in the first instance, be asked if it be an easy task which is assigned them, to disprove even this part of the POSITIVE EVIDENCE to the truth of the religion of Jesus? If they have ever staggered at the promises or threatenings of the Scriptures because of unbelief—discrediting all *revelation* from on high—can they not here discern supernatural evidence in confirmation of supernatural truths? May not *sight* lead them to faith? Must they not concede that the Christian has some reason for the hope that is in him? And may they not, at the very least, be led from thence to the calm and unprejudiced investigation, not only of the other prophecies, but of all the evidence which Christianity presents?

It cannot be alleged, with truth, that the prophecies which have been selected are ambiguous; that they bear the character of those auguries which issued from the cloud that always overhung the temple of Apollo, or of those pretended inspirations which emanated from the cave of Hera. It cannot be denied, that they were all pronounced hundreds or thousands of years before the events, which even at the present day demonstrate their fulfilment, though every other oracle has ceased for ages to appeal to a single fact. And the historical and geographical facts, which were so clearly foretold, are, in general, of so wonderful a nature, that the language of prophecy, though expressive of literal truth, seems at first sight to be hyperbolical; and the prophecies of Isaiah, in particular, have been charged with being "full of extravagant metaphor;"[1] the more extravagant

[1] Were it not for the impiety with which they are conjoined, the remarks of Paine on the prophecies would, to those who have studied them at all, be sufficiently amusing. He characterizes the book of Isaiah as "one continued bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." The predictions respecting Babylon, Moab, &c., are forsooth compared "to the story of the Knight of the Burning Mountain, the story of Cinderella," and such like. Isaiah, in short, "was a lying prophet and impostor." And "what can we say," he asks, "of these prophets, but that they were all impostors and liars?" Such words are not merely harmless; they may be also useful, as they show, that while every possible corroboration from history, fact,

the metaphor, or the more remarkable the predicted fact, the farther are the prophecies removed from all possibility of their having been the words of human invention.

The following comprehensive and luminous statement of the argument, extracted from a review of a former edition of this treatise, is here so apposite, that no apology need be offered for inserting it at length.

"This geographical argument (viz. the fulfilment of those prophecies which describe the future fate of particular nations, and the future aspect of their countries) has always appeared to us one of the most impregnable strongholds of Christian prophecy; or rather, one of the most resistless and wide-ranging instruments of aggressive evidence. There is no obscurity in the language of the prophet. There is no variety of opinion with regard to the object in his view. There is no denying of the change which he predicts. There is no challenging of the witnesses who prove the facts of the case. The former glory of these regions and kingdoms is recorded by ancient heathen historians, who knew nothing of the fall foretold. Their present state is described by recent and often infidel travellers, who knew often as little of the predictions which they were verifying by their narratives. It is not a particular event which has passed away, or a particular character who has perished, for whose era we must search in the wide page of history, and of whose description we may find so many resem-

reason, and even the unconscious testimony of infidels themselves, is given to the truth of the prophecies, nothing can be alleged on the other hand but what in the sight of all men manifestly is "bombastical rant, and extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." And since both speak not the truth, who is the liar? Isaiah the prophet, or Paine the infidel? And "what can we say" of this staunch asserter of rights, but that *his* right to the title is undisputed, and that these very words of his, were others wanting, must in every "age of reason" rivet to his unblest memory the foul aspersions he so falsely applied? Argument in such a case would be an idle waste of words. But while it would be an act of mere prodigality and folly to cast pearls before swine, the filth which they have snorted out may well be cast into their own kennel again, that they and their kind may partake of what pertains to them.

blances as to become perplexed in our application. The places and the people are named by the prophet, and the state in which they now exist is matter of actual observation. The fulfilment of the prediction is thus inscribed as upon a public monument, which every man who visits the countries in question may behold with his own eyes; and is expressed in a language so universally intelligible, that every man may be said to read it in his own tongue. To these scenes of Scripture prophecy we may point with triumph as to ocular demonstration; and say to the skeptical inquirer, in the words of the evangelist, 'Come and see.' The multitude of travellers who have recently visited the Holy Land and the adjacent regions, have furnished ample and authentic materials for the construction of so irrefragable an argument. Many of these travellers have discovered no intention of advocating by their statements the cause of revealed truth; and some of them have been obviously influenced by hostility to its claims. Yet, in spite of these prejudices, and altogether unconsciously on their part, they have recorded the most express confirmation of the Scripture prophecies, frequently employing in their descriptions the very language of inspiration, and bringing into view (though evidently without design) those features of the scene which form the precise picture painted in the visions of the prophet."

Willingly might the Christian here rest his assurance "in the faith once delivered to the saints," and leave to the unbeliever his hopeless creed. But the reasonings of one class of infidels must be combined with the researches of another, to give full force to the *Evidence of prophecy:* and they jointly supply both the clearest facts and the strongest arguments, and have made ready the means which need only to be applied for bringing the controversy with them, in its various bearings, and in their own words, to a short issue.

The metaphysical speculations of Hume,[1] and the

[1] It may not be here amiss to allude to that kind and courteous admonition to Christian writers, so meekly given, and with wis-

mathematical demonstrations of Laplace, which have been directed against the credibility of the miracles, rest entirely on the "*Theory of Probability.*" Assuming its logical and legitimate application to the testimony of any

dom rivalling its modesty, by this great master of *ideal* philosophy, in which, in order perhaps to bring their arguments to cope the better with his own, he prescribes to them, as best suited to their cause, the total rejection of reason! After quoting a passage from Lord Bacon's Works, which has a very different application, he adds,—*This method of reasoning* (about monsters, magic, and alchemy, &c.) *may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies of the Christian religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason* (of whom, by the by, Lord Bacon was one, and Sir Isaac Newton another). *Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure.* (Hume's Essays, § 10, vol. ii. pp. 136–7, edit. Edinb. 1800.) If these words may not justly be retorted against the "unbeliever's creed," excluding the epithet of holy; or *if* Mr. David Hume was better acquainted with the principles of the Christian Religion than the Author of it, who appealed to the *reason* of men, and asked them why they did not of themselves judge that which was right, and than the apostles Peter and Paul, who enjoin Christians to try all things, and to hold fast that which is good, and to be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a *reason* of the hope that is in them; then the writer of this treatise, having only the hard alternative of being either "a dangerous friend or a disguised enemy of the Christian religion," would, with whatever reluctance, prefer the former, and has to lament the evil he has done, and the "sure method" he has taken "of exposing it." And although he may hope that Christians in their charity will forgive him, he must yet leave to unbelievers the comfort and the joy of the triumph which, in the exercise of that reason which they have monopolized, these pages must necessarily give them. Or if, on the other hand, in somewhat stricter accordance with the truths of Scripture, the author of the Essay on *Human Nature* supplies, by the prefixed words, as clear practical proof, in his "Academical Philosophy," or Skepticism in Theory, that it is one of the characteristics of the *heart of man* to be *deceitful above all things*, as mere worldly wisdom and infidelity in practice too frequently demonstrate that it is also *desperately wicked;* and if Scripture prophecy can "endure the trial of reason," and its evidence be rejected; then the disciples of Hume, the traducers of the Christian religion as not founded on reason, holding to "human nature" as of itself it is, and deriding the idea of its proffered ransom from the guilt and rescue from the power of sin, have need, without exhausting their reason in abstract speculations, to look to their

supernatural evidence of a divine revelation, it is argued that the *improbabilities* of the occurrence of miracles, being contradictory to uniform experience, are so extreme as to destroy entirely the validity of *any* testimony to their truth which has been transmitted through so many ages. "And upon the whole, we may conclude," says Hume, "that the Christian religion, even at this day, cannot be believed by any reasonable person, without a miracle." What then is the evidence, that, even at this day, there are subsisting miracles which must command the belief of every person to the truth of the Christian religion, who is not so utterly unreasonable, and his mind so steeled against conviction, as not to be persuaded even by miraculous demonstration? And in what better or less exceptionable "method" can this evidence be meted out than according to the very "measure of probability" in use with unbelievers; and by means of which they profess to have discovered the deficiency of testimony to the truth of ancient miracles?

Archimedes demanded only a spot whereon to stand that he might move the world. If the most reasonable concession from the infidel be not as impossible to be obtained as the demand of Archimedes; and if he will admit either the truth of his own principles, or the force of mathematical proof, or if his prejudices be not immovable as a world, the existing and obvious fulfilment of a multiplicity of prophecies might well excite his attention, and convince him of the truth.

The *doctrine of chances*, or calculation of probabilities, has been reduced into a science, and is now in various ways of great practical use, and securely acted upon in the affairs of life. But it is altogether impossible that short-sighted man could select, from the infinite multitude of the possible contingencies of distant ages, any one of

own harder alternative, and (if both be not possibly conjoined) to choose between the incomparable deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart within,—evils greater far than all that the Christian can ever fear for himself from all the sneers of the sophist, or the railings of the ungodly.

such particular facts as abound in the prophecies; and it is manifest that, upon the principle of probabilities, the chance would be incalculable against the success of the attempt, even in a single instance. Each accomplished prediction is a miracle. But the advocate for Christianity may safely concede much, and reduce his data to the lowest terms. And if the unbeliever reckon not his own cause utterly hopeless, and "by no means fitted to endure the trial of reason," he must grant that there was as great a probability that *each* prediction would *not*, as that it *would*, have been fulfilled; or that the probabilities were *equal* for and against the occurrence of *each* predicted event. The Christian may fearlessly descend to meet him on this very lowly ground. And without enumerating all the particulars included in the volume of prophecy respecting the life and character and death of Christ; the nature and extent of Christianity, &c.; the destruction of Jerusalem; the fate of the Jews in every age and nation; the existing state of Judea, of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, the Arabs, &c.; the church of Rome, and the prophetic history which extends throughout two thousand three hundred years; may it not be assumed (though fewer would suffice, and though incontestable evidence has been adduced to prove more than double the number) that a *hundred* different particulars have been foretold and fulfilled? What, then, even upon these data, is the *chance*, on a calculation of probabilities, that all of them would have proved true—the chance diminishing one-half for every number; or what, in other words, is the hundredth power of two to unity?[1] Such is the desperate hazard to which the unbeliever would trust, that even from these premises, it is *mathematically demonstrable* that the number of chances is far greater against him than the number of drops in the ocean, although the whole world were one globe of water. Let

[1] Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités, par M. le Comte Laplace. Emerson on Chances, prop. 3. Hutton's edit. of Ozanam's Math. Recr. vol. i. See Gregory's Letters on the Christian Religion, p. 124.

the chance at least be counted before it be confided in. But who would risk a single mite against the utmost possible gain at the stake on which unbelievers here recklessly put to certain peril the interests of eternity?

But each prediction recorded in Scripture, being a *miracle of knowledge*, is equal to any miracle of power, and could have emanated only from the Deity. "All prophecies are real miracles, and as such only can be admitted as proof of any revelation."[1] They may even be said to be peculiarly adapted, in the present age of extended knowledge and enlightened inquiry, for being "the testimony of Jesus;" and they cannot justly be viewed as of inferior importance or authority to any miracles whatever.

Though the founder of a new religion, or the messenger of a divine revelation, and his immediate followers, who had to promulgate his doctrine, would give clear and unequivocal proof, by working miracles, that their commission was from on high; yet, the relation between any miraculous event, wrought in after-ages, and a religion previously established, might not be so apparent. Or, even if it were, yet any single and transient act of superhuman power being confined to a particular region, and cognisable only by a limited number, the testimony of these witnesses would be regarded only as secondary evidence, and could not, at least in a Christian

[1] Hume's Essays, vol. ii. p. 137. This statement of Hume's, combined with the manifest truth of prophecy, shows how all his theory against the truth of miracles may easily be overthrown by an admission of his own. Prophecy being true, and uniformly true, all prophecies being real miracles, miracles are *not* contrary to universal, or, even in a restricted sense, to uniform experience. They "are rendered probable by so many analogies," (Ibid. p. 134,) that on sufficient testimony they become provable, even upon Hume's own principles, especially when the inspiration of those very Scriptures, which record the disputed miracles, is verified by other miracles, the truth of which is established and experienced. And thus the boldest dogmas of skepticism may not only be braved, but reversed; and *it is more wonderful that the testimony* sealed in blood and rendered credible by miracles equally great, *should be false, than that the miracles should be true.*

land, be substantiated by proof so complete as that which was sealed by the blood of martyrs. And even if perpetual manifestations of miraculous power (however much men in apparent vindication of their unbelief may unreasonably ask such proof) were submitted to the inspection and experience of each individual in every age, they would only seem to distort the order and frame of nature, and by thus disturbing the regularity and uniformity of her operations, would, from their very frequency, cease to be regarded as supernatural; and, influenced by the same skeptical thoughts, those who now demand a sign would then be the first to discredit it. And true to reason and to nature it is, that those who will not believe Moses and the prophets would not be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. For the prophecies bear a direct reference to religion that is easily comprehended, and that cannot be misapplied. They have a natural and obvious meaning that may be known and read of all men. "Thus saith the Lord" is their prefix: this is the fact, is their proof. Instead of being weakened by the greatness of their number, the more they are multiplied, or the more frequently that facts formerly unknown, or events yet future, spring up in their verification, their evidence is redoubled, and they are ever permanent and existing witnesses that the word is of God. And, farther, the testimony which in every passing age confirms their truth, cannot be cavilled at; it is "not diluted by transmission through many ages;" it is borne, not to events in themselves miraculous, but to natural facts, whether historical or geographical, which have been proved by conclusive evidence, and which in numerous instances still subsist to stand the test of any inquiry. And even many of the facts (such as the marvellous fate of the expatriated Jews) are witnessed by all, and need no testimony whatever to declare them. And the records of the prophecies, preserved throughout every age, by the enemies of Christianity, are in every hand. If, then, no evidence less exceptionable, more conclusive, or more clearly miraculous could be given, the disciples of Hume, in resigning

an "academic" for a Christian faith, have only to apply aright the words of their master—"a wise man proportions his belief to the evidence;"[1] and they may thus find—what he in vain thought that he had discovered—an "everlasting check" against "delusion."[2]

It was the boast of Bolingbroke, in summing up his "philosophical" labours, that "he had pushed inquiry as far as the true means of inquiry are open, that is, as far as phenomena could guide him." Christian philosophy asks no more. It lays open the "means of inquiry," and presents, in the fulfilment of many prophecies, "phenomena" more wonderful than external nature ever exhibited, and demands only integrity of purpose, and that "inquiry be pushed unto the uttermost," that candour and reason may thus guide the impartial inquirer, by the light of positive evidence and miraculous proof, to the conviction and acknowledgment of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

The argument drawn by Volney from "The Ruins of Empires," is completely controverted by facts stated by himself, which, instead of militating against religion, directly establish the truth of prophecy;—and the unsubstantial fabric which he raised needs no other hand but his own to lay it in the dust.

But ridicule alone has often supplanted reason, and has been held as a test of the truth, and directed especially against the prophecies. And may not an evidence of their inspiration be found even in this last retreat of infidelity? The ruins of the moral world are as obvious in the sight of Omniscience as the ruins of the natural, of cities or of kingdoms: and his word can foretell the one as well as the other. And if those who scoff at religion can perceive no evidence from any historical facts, or any external objects, they might look within, and they would find engraven on their own hearts, in characters sufficiently legible, a confirmation of the prophecies. And if they substitute railing for reason, and think to mar religion with their mockery, to all others

[1] Hume's Essay on Miracles, vol. ii. p. 117. [2] Ib. p. 116.

they stand convicted, the living witnesses of the truth. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, ALL THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY WERE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world, that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." "There shall be mockers in the last time."[1]

[1] 2 Pet. iii. 3—6; Jude 18.

The Christian religion has thus to rank among its enemies many *false teachers* who were to arise, and who, as characterized in Scripture, *speak evil of the things that they understand not, who despise government, who are presumptuous and self-willed, who speak great swelling words of vanity, to allure others, promising them liberty, while they themselves are the children of corruption, and foaming out their shame.* (2 Peter, chap. ii. verses 1, 10, 12, 18, 19.) Blasphemy, obscenity, and unmeaning abuse, are the weapons of their warfare; they seek to debase religion into a conformity with their gross and grovelling imaginations; speaking of things that they know not, they utter great swelling words of vanity, as if, by a mere glance of their jaundiced mental vision, they could compass at once the whole of religious truth. But their arguments are as weak as their principles are base. And so manifestly does reason disclaim them, that for subverting their false assumptions, it is only necessary, in general, to make the contradiction as flat as the assertion is positive. As an example, it may be remarked, that in a list of aphorisms which lately issued from the London mart of infidelity, the most specious of the whole was thus expressed—"All other religions are false, and therefore the Christian religion is false also;" or, as the *argument* may be more logically stated, all other religions are false, and therefore the Christian religion is true. Yet who can look but with sorrow for the fate, as well as disgust and derision at the efforts of such pitiful cavillers, carping at the truth of the Christian religion—like unto foul and small fry (the less dignified the more befitting is the simile) nibbling at some weeds that have been cast by human hands upon a rock, and pressing with all their little strength to move it?

But there is another and a different class of unbelievers, to whom the words in the text no less strikingly apply; for they may be brought to confute the subtlest arguments of the ingenious skeptic, as well as to condemn the profane mockery of the most senseless railler. The great argument of infidelity, urged so

But if unbelievers lay just claim to wisdom, and make a fair appeal to reason, then, rather than place their security in abstract speculations, and tamper thus with the immortal hopes of their fellow-men, rather than trust

strenuously in these *last days*, against the credibility of miracles, from the inviolability of the laws of nature, could not be more plainly or forcibly stated than in the words of the apostle, declaring what that argument, the result of modern science, would be. If it had not been urged, a part of Christian evidence, derived from the fulfilment of this prediction, would still have been wanting, and we should still have had to wait for the last argument of infidelity, from whence to draw a new illustration of the truth. But the apostle not only states, he also confutes what scoffers in the last days would say, and not from scriptural authority, unavailing with them, but on philosophical principles, or from facts of which they are *willingly* ignorant—viz. the creation of the world and its having been overflowed by water, which show that al things are not as they were at the *beginning* of the creation. Hume, Bentham, and Laplace, must yet veil their heads, in the academy as well as in the temple, before the humble fishermen of Galilee. And their reasonings need only to be rightly applied, that they may as strongly advocate the undoubted evidence which miracles give, that the doctrine is of God, as the facts attested by Gibbon and Volney demonstrate that the prophecies of Scripture were given by inspiration of God. But such a subject can only be touched on in a concluding note; and abundant is the *evidence of prophecy*, seeing that it here needs only to be thus noticed. The transference of the leading argument of infidelity,—which a text and a fact may suffice to transfer,—into an additional and fundamental evidence of the truth, merits a full consideration, more recently given to it by the writer, in a *Demonstration of the truth of the Christian Religion*.

In these times of inquiry and discovery, it is pleasing to observe how the progress of science becomes ultimately subservient to the cause of truth. Philosophy begins to confess its great error, and to offer some expiation to religion. And in the short space since the publication of the sixth edition of this treatise, new testimony may now be subjoined to the preceding note, not less important towards the illustration of the evidences of Christianity, than the plates of Petra. *The recent origin of man* is a fact now universally admitted by geologists; and in a late number of the Edinburgh Review, (Num. civ. p. 396,) it is said, in reference to that fact alone, that "it seems to us to BE FATAL TO THE THEORY which we have presumed to call a *misconception* of the uniformity of causation, as signifying an unalterable sequence of causes and effects"—or, in other words, that it is a demonstration that all things have NOT *continued as they were from the beginning of the crea-*

in ridicule as the test of religious truth, and call an assumed and yet unpaid license to blasphemy by the name of liberty ; does it not behove them to look first to the positive evidence and miraculous proof of revelation, to detect its fallacy or own its power, and to quit their frail entrenchments, if, indeed, they find that the standard of Christian faith may, in despite of all their efforts, be fixed upon the proudest towers of infidelity? Let them, in the words of the prophet, bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified, or let them hear, and say, it is truth.

But, in conclusion, it may in reason be asked, if there be not something repugnant to the principles of Christianity, in the mind of that man who will not hear Moses

tion. "Certain strata have been identified," continues the Reviewer, "with the period of man's first appearance. We cannot do better than quote from Dr. Pritchard's excellent book, *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, his comment and application of this fact. 'It is well known that all the strata of which our continents are composed were once a part of the ocean's bed. *There is no land in existence that was not formed beneath* THE SURFACE OF THE SEA, or that has NOT RISEN FROM BENEATH THE WATER. Mankind had a beginning, since we can now look back to the period when the surface on which they lived began to exist. We have only to go back, in imagination, to that age, to represent to ourselves that there existed nothing on this globe but unformed elements, and that in the next period there had begun to breathe, and move, in a particular spot, a human creature, and we shall already have admitted, perhaps, the most astonishing miracle, recorded in the whole compass of the sacred writings,'" &c. Thus, in a better and more philosophic spirit, resting on a *fact*, of which the structure of the earth bears witness, and not on an unwarrantable and false assumption, men, without reference to the prediction, have at last discovered the very argument urged by the apostle in refutation of the skeptical saying of scoffers in the last days. *The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water.* The earth at first was without form and void. And since the *beginning* of the creation man himself was created. An *unalterable* experience has *not* therefore to be set up against the testimony of the Christian miracles ; for there is experience of the truth of, "perhaps, the most astonishing miracle recorded in the whole compass of the sacred writings." The arguments of the scoffers, and its manifest confutation, are alike confirmations of the truth of prophecy, itself, too, a miracle.

and the prophets, and who is slow of heart to believe all that they have spoken, though they afforded the means of detection in every prediction which they uttered, if their prophecies had been false; though they appealed to a vast variety of events which distant ages would bring into existence; though history has answered, and ocular demonstration has confirmed that appeal, our enemies themselves being witnesses; and although there *never was* any other truth that could be tried by such a test? Might he not be convinced of a doctrine less moral, or not quite according to godliness, by evidence less miraculous? Is there no reason to fear that the light of evidence, though sufficient to dispel the cloud upon the understanding, is yet unable to penetrate "the veil upon the heart?" Skepticism, at best, is not a subject for boasting. It is easy to exclude the noon-tide light by closing the eyes; and it is easy to resist the clearest truth by hardening the heart against it. And while, on the other hand, there are minds (and Newton's was among the number) which are differently affected by the Evidence of Prophecy, and which cannot be callous, when touched by the concentrated rays of such light from heaven, whence can this great dissimilarity of sentiment arise from the same identical and abundant proof? And into what else *can* the want of conviction be resolved than into the Scriptural solution of the difficulty—an evil heart of unbelief? They will not come unto the light, because the light would make them free.

But while the unbeliever rejects the means of conviction, and rests his hope on the assumed possibility that his tenets may be true, the positive evidence of Christianity convinces the unprejudiced inquirer, or rational and sincere believer, that it is impossible that his faith can be false. And when he searches out of the book of the Lord, and finds that none of them do fail, he looks on every accomplished prediction, even though it be the effect of the wrath of man, as a witness of God; he knows in whom he believes; he sees the rise and fall

of earthly potentates, and the convulsions of kingdoms, testifying of HIM who ruleth among the nations, and accrediting his word; he experiences the conviction that the most delightful of all truth, the hope which perisheth not, is confirmed by the strongest of all testimony, that Heaven itself hath ratified the peace which it hath proclaimed; he rests assured that prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and, although he knows not the mode of the operations of the Spirit, he sees the demonstration of his power. And "taking heed thus unto the sure word of prophecy, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart," the true believer learns, from the things that are past, the certainty of the things that are to come hereafter: he rests not satisfied with a mere name that he liveth, while yet he might be dead; but having obtained that "precious faith," the germ of immortality, which springeth up into eternal life, he experiences the power of the world to come, and unites the practice with the profession of religion; he copies the *zeal* of those who spend their strength for that which is in vain, and their labour for that which profiteth not, but he directs it to the attainment of an incorruptible inheritance, for he knows that his labour shall not be in vain while he yields obedience to that Word which is the Charter of his Salvation, and which so unequivocally bears the seal and superscription of the King of kings.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

CURSORY REMARKS ON SOME OF THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL.

THE preceding pages are so far from exhausting the subject, or presenting a complete view of the evidence of prophecy, that they only occupy, for the greater part, a space which writers on prophecy have very sparingly touched. Prophecies fulfilled are the miracles of every age of the church. And while new evidence of the inspiration of the Scriptures can so abundantly be adduced from geographical facts, discovered in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, there are other predictions of far more momentous import, which have only partially met their completion, and which the future fate of the world has yet more fully to unseal. Much has been written on the more obscure prophecies, which have already been fulfilled. And different writers have speculated freely on the *mode* in which the predicted events, according to their interpretation, are to be brought to pass. But "the times and the seasons the Father hath in his own power." And, without entering into any minute exposition or detail, the following remarks may tend, in some measure, to show how the obscurity of the symbolical prophecies, which refer to events already past, is, in some instances at least, greatly overrated—how the objections of infidels may be obviated, and their very arguments be still farther adduced, in testimony of the truth of revelation, and how, notwithstanding the obscurity in which these prophecies are involved, it may be manifestly discerned in them, that He who ruleth among the nations has revealed his word to mortals, and that each vision depicted there, is the glance of Omniscience through the history of man.

The question respecting the more obscure prophecies which the Christian has to argue with the unbeliever is not—whether the same events might not have been foretold in a more distinct and definite manner (for the predictions themselves are declared

to be sealed, or to remain obscure, till the time of the end, or the period of their completion; and as they refer to the political state of the world, or to the successive governments that were to arise, there are obvious reasons for this purposed obscurity, which apply not to the numerous literal predictions)—But the question *is*, whether, such as they are, and viewed in connection with other prophecies, they bear not a closer and less convertible similitude to the events of which they were avowedly predictive, than human sagacity could have discerned or invented.

Although the divine mind be perfect in wisdom, yet that wisdom is unsearchable; and the mode of communicating any superhuman knowledge must not only be regulated by the nature of the ultimate design of the special revelation, but be adapted also to the perception, capacities, and habits of thought of the human recipients. In the symbolical predictions of Daniel, both these ends are perfectly attained. The first, as so expressed, required that the prophecy should be sealed for many days, which was therefore conveyed in a figurative manner. And the symbols themselves are such as were adopted in the practice, and familiar to the understanding of men; and when viewed in conjunction with the explanation given by the prophet, they are, after the event, abundantly significant. It is obvious from history, as well as from ancient coins, that different kingdoms were signified or marked by different emblematical representations. And, notwithstanding the diffusion of knowledge, the same practice is continued to the present day. Instead, therefore, of their being singular or unintelligible, the very method of representing kingdoms is used in these prophetic similitudes, which was then, and still is, common in the world, and which arose perhaps at first from necessity, and was sanctioned afterwards by use.

Not only is the emblematical representation given, but the significancy of the emblems is also explained. And in relation to the same events, in the cases about to be noticed, two different images or figures are represented to view. An accordance in each particular being requisite to a just historical interpretation of the prophecy, there is thus no possibility of any strained accommodation of the events to the prediction; and that interpretation, which is just in every particular, must be strictly and exclusively applicable. And such interpretation having been given, instead of their being now chargeable with impenetrable obscurity, it is not perhaps in the power of human language to give a more unequivocal and less ambiguous symbolical representation, which designedly was to be understood only after the event, of the rise of successive governments, than is given in the book of Daniel, by two different figures, accompanied by an explanation of each.

While the truth of the predictions of Daniel may be investigated in the present day, the undoubted certainty of his inspiration was accredited at the time in a manner at once easy to be

understood, and impossible to be controverted, and altogether unparalleled in the annals of heathen oracles.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, at that time the most potent monarch in the world, had, in his conquests over the surrounding nations, subjected the Jews to his authority; and, among other tokens of obeisance which he demanded of the king of Judah, he required that certain princes of the children of Israel, high in character and skilful in wisdom, should be sent from Jerusalem, in order to be placed in his household, and to be numbered among the magicians and astrologers, whom he was wont to consult, and who formed one of the appendages of his splendid court. Daniel was one of them. He and his friends of the house of Judah were soon "preferred far beyond all the wise men that were in all the realm." But in the court of a despot the highest subject is a slave. And it soon happened that their lives were in the greatest peril, from which no human prudence could have rescued them. It was the business of every courtier to minister to the will and pleasure of the king, otherwise their lives were in danger of being forfeited at once. And a cause of mental disquietude soon arose in the breast of the king, which his magicians were commanded to remove. His mind had been disturbed by dreams, "his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him," and he, whose will would brook no control, called his wise men, and commanded them to make known the dream, and the interpretation thereof. This was a test which all their pretensions could not abide, and a difficulty which all their artifice could not elude. They asked the king "to make known to them the dream, and they would show him the interpretation." In the latter respect, they might easily have practised on the credulity of the monarch, and put his mind at ease. "But the dream had gone from him;" if recalled to his recollection, he would at once recognise it; and those who pretended in other matters to be astrologers, and magicians, and sorcerers, and who could not then deceive him, were commanded to tell the dream itself, and then he should know that they "could also show him the interpretation." Compliance with a demand so unreasonable was impossible for man; the attempt was utterly hopeless; and "they answered the king and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter; therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler that asketh such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth; and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." These words were true; though they may have been inconsistent with the pretensions of the magicians, when they were not so severely tried. But when the passions are inflamed, the spirit troubled, or pride wounded, reason and truth are alike disregarded; and however unjustifiable or barbarous the deed, none could gainsay it: and

the king being angry and very furious, and having previously told them that *there was but one decree for them*, commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. All the art of man was baffled; "lying and corrupt words" could be of no avail; something beyond deception, and that could not be accused of it, was necessary here, and wholly unattainable by mortal. A fit occasion, combined, as it afterwards proved to be, with the revelation of the future fate of the world, was presented for the display of more than human wisdom. He alone, who knoweth the thoughts and intents of the heart, and who is a discerner of the spirit, could communicate to the mind of man that knowledge which the king required. And the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, who had chosen the children of Israel for his peculiar people, that all the families of the earth might finally be blessed in the seed of Abraham, heard the prayers of Daniel, and of the other captive princes of Judah, when innocently condemned to die; and he who turneth the hearts of men as the rivers of water, and who holds in his hands the thoughts of kings, as well as of their subjects, was pleased to reveal the secret unto Daniel in a night vision. And it was to God that he expressed his gratitude, and ascribed all the praise.—"Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever, for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons. He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things. He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee, for thou hast made known unto us the king's matter." And as Daniel thus offered up his praise and gratitude in secret prayer unto God, so he boasted not of himself before the king, nor attributed the knowledge of the secret to his own wisdom, but gave all the glory unto God, declaring that there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known WHAT SHALL BE IN THE LATTER DAYS. (Dan. chap. ii.)

Daniel told unto the king his dream—the vision of his head upon his bed—and the thoughts that had come into his mind, and that (till Daniel recalled them) had passed from his own remembrance.

It is impossible to conceive a more discriminating test of superhuman knowledge, or any means by which a stronger impression could have been made upon the mind of the king, of the most positive conviction that Daniel was indeed the Prophet of God, and that as he had told him the dream, he had shown also the true interpretation thereof. And as the revealing of the dream afforded this indubitable proof to Nebuchadnezzar, so the dream itself and its interpretation, and the exact completion of this pre-

diction of events then future, give to us in the present day proof as indubitable, that Daniel did make known the dream to Nebuchadnezzar,—that the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

It is as easy for an impartial inquirer in the present day as it was for Nebuchadnezzar to judge of the truth of the words of Daniel. Every word of the prophet would bring back to the mind of the king his own former thoughts, and every part of the prophecy still gives as striking demonstration that Daniel did indeed reveal what would come to pass thereafter, and what would be in the latter days. And although it was as utterly impossible for Nebuchadnezzar to know of those future events which Daniel foretold, as it was for the magicians to restore to him his own lost thoughts, yet nothing is now easier than to discern and to apply to each and every part of the prediction its successive and corresponding event. And it was not merely to satisfy the disquietude of Nebuchadnezzar's mind—it was not merely that the life of Daniel and of his fellows might be spared —that a condemned captive became thus an inspired prophet, but that the word of God might be ratified by supernatural evidence—that Christians in every age might know in whom they have believed—that the providence of God might finally be manifested over all, and that if the gospel be hid, it may be hid only to them that are lost, who seeing, see not, and who hearing, will not understand.

The only requisite commentary on the predictions is a simple and succinct recapitulation of the events which they avowedly prefigured. The interpretation, which is alike prophetic with the symbolical image, declares, *that a kingdom inferior to the Babylonian was immediately to succeed it—that another kingdom of brass was then to arise, which was to bear rule over all the earth—that the fourth kingdom was to be strong as iron, to break in pieces and subdue all things, or all other kingdoms.* The Persian empire was established on the subversion of the Babylonian—the power or duration of which it did not attain. The Macedo-Grecian empire, under Alexander the Great, succeeded to the Persian. It is called a kingdom of brass, a metal more justly emblematical of the Grecian than any other—as they were distinguished by their coats of brass, and denominated the brass-clothed Greeks.[1] This empire is described *as having ruled over all the earth.* It not only surpassed, in the extent of its conquests and dominion, the Babylonian and the Persian, but was literally called a universal empire; and its founder is still known to fame, as one of the greatest of conquerors who ever lived. (These empires are more particularly described by Daniel in his subsequent prophecies.) The next empire which extended its power over these countries

[1] Homeri Il. ii. 47.

was the Roman. *It was strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all, and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise.* Iron was its appropriate emblem. It was an iron crown which its emperors wore (proverbially the iron crown of Italy;)—and an iron yoke to which it subjected many nations: *It bruised all the residue of the former kingdoms, and brake them in pieces.* It is impossible, on a retrospect of this history, to give any representation, in so few words, more justly descriptive of the Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires. But the Roman empire itself was broken down —divided into different kingdoms—some of them powerful, and others comparatively weak. The sovereigns of these different kingdoms have been perpetually contracting matrimonial alliances with each other; but, notwithstanding this seeming bond of union, they have not united or adhered together. The knowledge of these historical truths, familiar to every reader, alone suffices for the elucidation of the prophecy. *And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.*

To Nebuchadnezzar, who aspired only after human power and glory, the various empires that were in their order to succeed his own, and tyrannize over the world, were represented by a splendid image. But in the prophetic vision of the "Man of God" they appeared in other colours, and assumed a very different form. And under the appropriate symbol of wild beasts, varying in fierceness and cruelty, and distinguished by monstrous peculiarities, the successive empires of Babylon, Persia, Macedon or Greece, and Rome—the future promoters of idolatry and oppressors of man—were aptly characterized.

In the vision of the prophet, not only the number of the kingdoms and the order of succession are the same, and also the different characteristic features accordant with those of the preceding symbolical representation, but to the brief outline given in the former, several additional circumstances are annexed, and (in a manner totally at variance with any wild and extravagant fancies arising from mere pretended foreknowledge) the nearer that the vision approaches to "the latter times," it becomes the more copious and the more minutely defined.

The first kingdom, viz. the Babylonian, then existing, was represented by a lion that had eagle's wings. But although then worthy of such emblems, the wings wherewith it was lifted up were to be plucked. "It was to be humbled and subdued, and

made to know its human state,[1]—a man's heart (instead of a lion's) was given it. The second kingdom was the Persian; it was noted by historians for its brutal cruelty,—and is prefigured by a bear. *This beast raised itself upon one side*, the Persians being under the Medes at the fall of Babylon, but presently rising up above them. *And it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it*, signifying the kingdoms of Sardis, Babylon, and Egypt, which were conquered by it, but did not belong to its proper body."[2] The third beast represents the kingdom that was to succeed the Persian, which was the empire of the Greeks, first established over the east by Alexander the Great. It consisted of various nations, far more diversified in their manners and customs than were the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, and was thus spotted like a *leopard*. The rapidity of its rise and conquests is aptly denoted by its four wings, while the four heads are significative of the exact number of kingdoms into which it was divided. The fourth empire was the Roman. It was dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and diverse from all kingdoms. Such was the Roman empire, and such are the very words of the prophecy concerning the "fourth kingdom." The beast was terrible; it had great *iron* teeth, it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.—The Roman empire was larger, stronger, and more terrible, and of greater duration than any of the former; it was diverse from all kingdoms that were before it; and, on its fall, it was subdivided into a greater number of distinct kingdoms. Machiavel (for whose creed the church of Rome and infidelity can alone contend) who wist not of the consequences of the historical fact, specifies by name the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided. Some of these kingdoms at length fell, and new ones arose. But, as Sir Isaac Newton remarks, they are still called the *ten kings* from their first number. And like the ten toes of the image, the fourth beast had *ten* horns, which the prophet interprets kingdoms, (v. 7, 24.) After these another power, diverse from the first, (v. 24,) and little at its commencement, was to arise, which was to subdue three kings. *In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.* He was to *speak great words against* ("by the side of," or on assumed equality with) *the Most High, to wear out the saints of the Most High; and to think to change times and laws, and they were to be given into his hands* for a long but yet limited period. The church of Rome rose to power, diverse from that of any other, after the dismemberment of the Roman empire. The exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the state of Rome, were subjected to its

[1] Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel, p. 29.
[2] Ibid.

temporal as well as spiritual authority,[1] and plucked up before it. *In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man.* "By its eyes it was a seer, Επισκοπος, a bishop in the literal sense of the word; and this church claims the universal bishopric. With his mouth *he spake very great things;* gave laws to kings and nations as an oracle, pretends to infallibility, and that his dictates are binding on the whole world."[2] His look was more stout than his fellows: the pope, as head of the church, has not only ever claimed supremacy over every other bishop, but kings have often prostrated themselves before him and done the office of menials. And how closely does the character of *wearing out the saints of the Most High* befit the church of Rome. However much its character may now in reality or in appearance be altered, the time is not distant, when every *auto da fe* (*act of* Romish *faith*) brought the recusants of idolatry—the worshippers of the Most High—to the stake, and by every refinement in cruelty did it try to wear them out. *And he shall think to change times and laws;* "appointing fasts and feasts, canonizing saints, granting pardons and indulgences for sins, instituting new modes of worship, imposing new articles of faith, enjoining new rules of practice, and reversing at pleasure the laws both of God and men."[3]

The prophetic interpretation of another vision of Daniel now presents such a retrospective view of the history of the East, that scarcely the slightest comment is requisite to show its perfect adaptation to the events. *At the time of the end shall be the vision. I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation, for at the time appointed the end shall be. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king* (Alexander the Great). *Now, that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power* (which none of them ever attained).—*And in the latter time of their kingdom,* (at a distance of time, but prevailing over the same territory,) *when the transgressors are come to the full,* (Isa. xxiv. 5, 6,) *a king of fierce countenance,* (Mahomet, who proffered only submission or the sword,) *and understanding dark sentences,* (wherewith the Koran pre-eminently abounds,) *shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power* (he possessed no hereditary dominion, and arose from nothing). *And he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people, or the people of the holy ones* (the Christians). *And through his policy shall he cause craft to prosper in his hand* (by a faith accommodated to the passions of men). *And he shall*

[1] Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel, p. 73. Bishop Newton's Dissert. xiv.

[2] Sir Isaac Newton on Daniel, p. 75.

[3] Bishop Newton, Diss. xiv.

magnify himself in his heart. ("There is no God but one, and Mahomet is his prophet.") *And by peace shall he destroy many.* Such is the intrinsic despotism and withering influence of Mahometan government, that under their sway countries naturally the most fertile, and long exuberant in population and produce, have been depopulated and *destroyed* to a greater degree by *peace* than any other countries have been by war. *He shall stand up against the prince of princes, magnifying himself even to the prince of the host* (calling himself a greater prophet than Christ). *It waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land,* (Palestine,) the very direction and progress, according to Gibbon, of the greatest and most permanent of the Mahometan conquests. *It cast down of the host and of the stars to the ground,* (Christian churches,) *and stamped upon them, and the place of the sanctuary* (Jerusalem) *was cast down. The vision was for many days.* Many days have passed, and all is accomplished but the last end of the "desolation, which has given the sanctuary to be trodden under foot."

Looking back then upon those successive empires which are the best known, and have been the most influential on the fate of the world, and comparing the bare predictions and the prominent events, is there not visible a chain of prophecy, without a link distorted or broken, stretched by no human hand over the history of man from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the present hour, and on which the future fate of the world hangs suspended still? And without diverging to other matters, may not the primary question be here reverted to, whether, such as they are, these predictions bear not a closer and less convertible similitude to the events of which they are avowedly predictive, than human sagacity could have discovered or invented? And may not a case be here put, which would try the reasoning powers of reckless mockers, and bring this question to the proof?

Were a despot now troubled at the thought—a thought which no tyrant could brook—that the Bible is the word of God, and that he who is higher than the highest regardeth him; and were he to possess the power, and to congregate around him all the illuminati—the magicians and astrologers—of modern times, and to demand of them the cause why the image of Nebuchadnezzar and the visions of Daniel bear so striking a resemblance to those future kingdoms, and to the latter times of which they were avowedly symbolical; and how, by natural causes and human wisdom alone, the whole history of the Jews to the present hour was written, at the very least, two thousand years ago; and how all the countries, and all the people, and all the cities of whose destiny they spoke, should accredit, to every jot and to a very tittle, the words of the seers of Israel, and present in their history and fate an exact counterpart of a professedly prophetic delineation; and were they farther to be debarred from ridicule,

and bound to reason, and told that "they dared not prepare lying and corrupt words to speak before him," and that "there was but one decree for them," if they did not make good their professed claim to such wisdom, show the *sure interpretation* of the matter, resolve all his doubts, and restore quietude to his troubled thoughts, such as words of truth like Daniel's gave to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar; then, verily, much do we fear, would the lives of the *philosophes* and *savans* of Europe be in no less jeopardy than were those of their prototypes, the wise men and the soothsayers of Babylon. And their poor faith having no treasures in store to repay the life-blood of a single mortal; no *hope*, though otherwise forfeited, sufficient to bribe one solitary martyr to the block; to what fitter terms than these (if their wisdom on such a trial should fail them) could their blanched and quivering lips, long used to mockery before, give utterance at last, "There is not a man upon earth that can show the king's matter; therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler that asketh such things at any magician or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth: and there is none other that can show it before the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."[1]

The frequent perversion of the "truth as it is in Jesus," and the substitution in its stead of the "commandments of men;" the party animosities, and religious wars and persecutions, so contrary to the spirit of the gospel, which have so long prevailed: the gross impostures, absurd superstitions, and impious rites, which have often been forced into unnatural alliance with Christianity, and grafted by human hands into the heavenly stock; the domineering spirit of an unholy priesthood; the partial diffusion of the religion of Jesus during many ages; and the delusions of a manifest impostor triumphing over the Christian religion, even in the regions which gave it birth; have all proved stumbling-blocks in the way of many, or a rock of offence on which they have made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. Yet all these are but the various combatings of the impure passions, and the worldly-mindedness of man against a holy and spiritual faith—the workings of a *predicted* "mystery of iniquity:" and not only does the purity of the gospel itself remain unaffected by them all, but its truth, as the inspired word of God, is the more fully established. Even here "God has not left himself without a witness;" and "we do well to give heed to the sure word of prophecy, which shineth as a light in a dark place."

But the church of Christ, though long militant "against spiritual wickedness in high places," shall, according to the Scriptures, become, even on earth, finally triumphant. And it is not merely from the analogy of the truth of the past, that the certainty of the events yet future may be confided in; for there is not wanting, in

[1] Daniel ii. 10, 11.

the actual state of the world, subsisting evidence of the germinating fulfilment of prophecy. The rapid diffusion of knowledge; the numerous inventions and discoveries in physical science, and the immense accession they have given to the power of man; the facilities of communication and frequencies of intercourse that now prevail throughout the world; the nature of recent wars—contests for principles rather than for property; the abandonment in different states and kingdoms of the principles and the practice of unrestricted and unmitigated despotism, and the establishment of constitutional governments in its stead; the ready expression and powerful efficacy of public opinion, sobered down as it is to the desire of substantial rather than theoretic liberty, and of its expansion throughout the world, and awed by the remembrance of all the exhibited horrors of anarchy and atheism; the manifold philanthropic and religious associations, so diversified in their objects, and active in their operations, for alleviating the miseries, enlightening the ignorance, and ameliorating the moral condition of our species; and, though last, not least of all, the unexampled and astonishing dissemination of the Scriptures, and the avidity with which they are sought after in many a land; all these unite in giving the same promise to mortal hope, which the words of Scripture impart to religious faith, that the "appointed time," whatever convulsions may yet intervene, is approximating, when despotism and superstition shall come to an end, and when brutal power or governments, fitly symbolized by wild beasts, shall cease to trample on the liberties of man. The powers of darkness are already shaken. He whose "look was more stout than his fellows" has been greatly humbled. His dominion has in part been *taken away*, and it will *be consumed and destroyed until the end.*

No. II.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE FINAL RESTORATION OF THE JEWS AND THEIR RETURN TO THE LAND OF JUDEA.

"The Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and will have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." (Deut. xxx. 3, 4, 5.) "And it shall come to pass that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the *outcasts* of Israel, and gather together the *dispersed* of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isaiah xi. 11, 12, &c.) "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee." (Isa. lx. 8—10, &c.) "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." (Isaiah lxi. 4, &c.) "Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner: and the measuring line shall go over against it; and it shall not be plucked up nor thrown down any more for ever." (Jer. xxxi. 37, &c.) "But ye, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded," &c. "For I will take you (O house of Israel) from among the heathen,

and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." (Ezek. xxxvi. 8, 10—24.) "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. (Ibid. xxxvii. 21, &c.) "Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee, when I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man," &c. (Zech. ix. 12, &c.) "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall be no more pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos ix. 13—15.) "I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee. I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men." (Micah ii. 12.)

These prophecies, exclusive of many others, need no comment. They declare, as clearly as language can, that the Jews shall return to Judea, and be at last permanently re-established in the land of their fathers. The uniform experience of the literal truth of every prediction respecting their past history may suffice to give assurance of the certainty of their predicted restoration. And, amidst many signs that *the times of the Gentiles* are drawing towards their *fulfilment*, many concurring circumstances seem also to be *preparing* the way of the children of Israel. Scattered as they have been for so many ages through the world, and maintaining still their distinctive character, their whole history forbids the thought that they will ever mingle among the nations, or cease to be, what they have ever been, a peculiar people. But while their history as a nation gave, for the space of many generations, unequivocal attestations of an overruling providence, sustaining the theocracy of the commonwealth of Israel; and while, during a period of still greater duration, they have been "a people scattered and peeled:" yet, after the lapse of so many ages, they are still reserved for illustrating the truth, the mercy, and the glory of the God of Israel; *at eventide it shall be light.* They now begin, centuries of persecution and spoliation having passed away, to participate, in cases too numerous to be specified, of benefits arising from the altered spirit of the times. And possessed, as in an unexampled degree they are, of *silver and gold*,

and of large portions of the public funds of various kingdoms, they may be said, even now, in some manner, to *inherit the riches of the Gentiles*. And commanding, as in a great measure they do, the rate of exchange throughout Europe, they are entitled, from the present influence of money on the security of governments, and on the art and results of war, to high political consideration; and the time may not thus be remote, when they shall be *raised up as an ensign among the nations*. Not naturalized to the isles of the Gentiles, either by law or affection, or bound to any soil by the possession of fixed property, which would be of no easy transference; but ever looking with undiminished love to the *land of their fathers*, even after an expatriation uninterrupted for nearly eighteen centuries, they are ready, whenever the time shall be fulfilled, to *fly* thither *like a cloud, and like doves to their windows*. But to what degree, and in what manner the present convulsions of the Turkish empire, combined with the peculiar, and, in many instances, novel condition of the Jews throughout Europe and America, shall be the means of facilitating their eventual restoration to their own land, no mortal can determine. It is enough for Christians to know, that two thousands of years, through nearly which period it has been dormant, can neither render extinct the title, nor prescribe the heaven-charted right of the seed of Abraham to the final and everlasting possession of the land of Canaan; that God *will remember the land, and gather together* unto it his ancient people; and that his word concerning Zion, which he hath neither *forgotten* nor *forsaken*, is, *I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers, and they that made thee waste, shall go forth of thee*, &c. (Isa. xlix. 16, 17, &c.) "And that through all the changes which have happened in the kingdoms of the earth, from the days of *Moses* to the *present time*, which is more than three thousand two hundred years, nothing should have happened to prevent the POSSIBILITY of the *accomplishment* of these prophecies, but, on the contrary, that the state of the *Jewish* and *Christian nations* at this day, should be such as renders them easily *capable*, not only of a *figurative*, but even of a *literal completion* in every particular, if the will of God be so; this is a *miracle*, which hath nothing *parallel* to it in the phenomena of nature."—*Clarke's Evidences.*

No. III.

ABSTRACT OF PROPHECIES RELATIVE TO THE GREAT APOSTASY.

CLEARLY revealed as is the will of God in Scripture, and perfectly calculated as is the gospel to effect the happiness of man, and faithful unto the death as many of the primitive Christians were,—it is no less manifest that an apostasy, or falling away from the faith, was foretold. And who can read the Scriptures with an unbiassed mind, and look to the history of the Christian church, and doubt for a moment that there has been an apostasy, or falling away from the truth and simplicity of the faith as it is in Jesus? Or who, in a like unbiassed manner, can read the prophecies respecting that apostasy, and cherish even a momentary doubt of their application?

It would be foreign to the object of this treatise, and it would require a volume rather than a concluding page, to enter at large upon such a subject. But the simple comparison of a few prominent predictions and undeniable facts, which scarcely need any illustration, may tend to show that much evidence of the inspiration of Scripture may be drawn from the obscure prophecies, and that their obscurity in a great measure vanishes, on the most succinct combination of predictions and of facts.

The coincidence, not in meaning only, but in words, which subsists between the following predictions, strikingly denotes their reference to or connection with the same subject. And when viewed as a portraiture of events now passed, or still in progress, the apparent obscurity arising from the adoption of symbols, or figurative representations, may be at once removed by merely bearing in mind that in Scripture itself the term *beast* is explained as denoting a king, kingdom, or reigning power; and that, in the phraseology of the Old Testament, idolatry, or the worship of false gods or images, in any form, is uniformly represented as whoredom or fornication. Without straining either a word of sacred writ, or a fact in history, it is left to every unprejudiced reader to determine on whose FOREHEAD it is that the marks of apostasy and names of blasphemy are so conspicuously written, that they legitimately form a part of the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. xvii.)

The "*forbidding to marry*, and commanding to *abstain from meats*, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth," (1 Tim. iv. 3,) are

mentioned literally as prominent marks of the apostasy. And the celibacy of the clergy, both regular and secular, and the multiplicity of fasts, appointed and observed by the church of Rome, are in complete and manifest accordance with the prediction. The former is expressly contrary to the sanction and authority of Scripture, which saith—"a bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife;"—and the reason assigned for the latter, as taught in *the first Catechism or abridgment of Christian doctrine*,[1] "that by fasting we may satisfy God for our sins," is a monstrous perversion of all Christian doctrine, and shows with how great a *falling away from the faith* the observance of such "commandments of the church" of Rome is accompanied.

Giving heed to doctrines of devils—literally of, or concerning, *demons*—a term often applied by Greek writers to those who were canonized or deified after their death, or who were accounted agents or mediators between gods and men. (1 Tim. iv. 3.) The same word was used by the Athenians, (Acts xvii. 18,) when they accused Paul of being a setter up of strange gods or demons —because he preached unto them Jesus, who had been raised from the dead.—*But in his estate*, (or in the stead of God,) shall he honour *the God of forces*, or, as rendered in the margin, *Gods protectors*, divine guardians, or tutelary saints. (Dan. xi. 38.) The corruption of the pure worship of God, the introduction of demonolatry into the Christian Church, and the trusting to other intercessors than the one only Mediator, seem here evidently referred to. It is not needful to ask what church, as well as the Grecian, has *given heed to doctrines* concerning departed mortals, such as were believed on by heathens; or who have canonized dead men, worshipped them in *the stead* of God, believe on them as *strong protectors*, address them as intercessors, worship at their shrines, *regard their glory*, and *honour them with gold, silver, and precious stones and pleasant things*. (Dan. xi. 38.)

Giving heed to seducing spirits, speaking lies in hypocrisy, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. *Whose coming is after the power of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*, 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10. *By thy sorceries were all nations deceived*, Rev. xviii. 23. The power of working miracles is held by the church of Rome as a mark of the true church; but the assumption of that power is truly a mark of the great apostasy. And what else are wilful impositions, lying legends, and pretended miracles, the liquefying of the blood of St. Januarius, for example, still practised, thrice every year, in a church in Naples, but the *deceivableness of unrighteousness?* Or what creed is more

[1] Published for the use of the London District, and printed by R. Keating, Brown & Co., London, Printers to the R. R. the Vicars Apostolic, 1812, p. 33.

common in Rome, to which the pope and the cardinals have given their sanction, than the working of miracles by the images of saints?

Speaking of the selfsame apostasy, it is said by the apostle Paul, "the day of Christ shall not come, except there come a *falling away* first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the TEMPLE OF GOD, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4.) These words, descriptive of *the man of sin*, are linked to the description of *the little horn in Daniel*, (p. 383,) not only by a similarity of character, but by an identity of fate. *And he shall speak great words against the Most High.* (Dan. vii. 25; Rev. xiii. 5, 6.) It admits of no question who it is that has *exalted himself* most highly in *the Church*, that has assumed the claim of infallibility, and of titles which pertain to God alone, and to whom "adoration" is paid, when he is enthroned, in the most magnificent temple on earth, as the head of the Church.

The more closely that the connection is traced between the prophecies of St. Paul, Daniel, and St. John, they become the more copious, discriminative, and defined. The beast having seven heads and ten horns,[1] which was subject to the authority of the great whore,[2] (or idolatrous church,) is evidently connected, in its character, duration, and fate,[3] with the little horn of Daniel's fourth kingdom, or the Roman. The locality or seat of this dominion, *diverse* from the former kingdoms, could scarcely be more circumstantially defined. *The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth*, (Rev. xvii. 9.) Rome was proverbially the *city on seven hills; and there are seven kings; five are fallen and one is*, (v. 10.) Five forms of government had before that time fallen, and another then existed. *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which have received no kingdoms as yet.* The Roman empire, then entire, was, about the time of the establishment of popery, divided into ten kingdoms, corresponding with the ten horns of the fourth beast, or the toes of the great image. (pp. 382—384.) *The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which* REIGNETH *over the kings of the earth.* The great city which then reigned over the kings of the earth was Rome. It is all but named. And under a symbol the very name was hid. The beast had *a name, a number, and a mark*, (Rev. xiii. 18, xv. 2,) *and his number is six hundred threescore and six.* (Among the Hebrews and Greeks all the letters were numerals, or equivalent to figures, which were not in use among them.) Three different designations being given, *three* corresponsive

[1] Rev. xiii. 1; xvii. 7.
[2] Rev. xvii. 15.
[3] Dan. vii. 20, 21, 25, 26; Rev. xiii. 5, 7, 10, xvii. 14.

words, instead of one, as has been generally sought, seem to be required. The beast was first described by Daniel; and in Hebrew characters, Romiith,[1] Roman, agreeing with *beast* or kingdom, contains the precise number, or that of his *name;* while *Lateinos*,[2] the *number* of his name, "which is the *number of a man*," and *Apostates*,[3] the *mark*, the brand of the *apostasy*, both fatally contain the same prophetic number.

There are other characteristics which need no comment. "Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore *that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*, Rev. xvii. 2, 15. *They shall be given into his hand*, Dan. vii. 25. *And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life*," Rev. xiii. 7, 8. The *catholic* means the universal church. *The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them. He shall wear out the saints of the Most High*, Dan. vii. 21, 25. *It was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them*, Rev. xiii. 7. *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*, Rev. xvii. 6.

She was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, Rev. xvii. 4, the official clothing of the pope and of the cardinals, *and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls*, as also they are, and wherewith the decking of their churches, altars, and images did abound.

We ask not how all the subtilty of Jesuitism, or all the deceivableness of unrighteousness can rescue popery from the grasp of so many prophecies encircling it on every side; it is the pur-

[1]		[2]		[3]	
ר *R*	200	Λ *L*	30	A *A*	1
ו *o*	6	*a a*	1	*π p*	80
ם *m*	40	*τ t*	300	*o o*	70
י *i*	10	*ε e*	5	*ς st*	6
י *i*	10	*ι i*	10	*a a*	1
ת *th*	400	*ν n*	50	*τ t*	300
	666	*o o*	70	*η e*	8
		ς s	200	*ς s*	200
			666		666

These words have often been applied as denoting the name of the beast; and Dr. Clark, in his commentary, has adduced the term Ἡ Λατινη βασιλεια—the Latin kingdom; asalso containing the exact number 666.

pose of these remarks, as connected with the evidence of prophecy, to show that even the long-continued and wide-spread apostasy from the Christian faith, which has often given a seeming sanction to infidelity, is itself a proof of the inspiration of Scripture; and that the war which has long been waged against those *who kept the commandments of God and had the testimony of Jesus*, only serves the more to confirm the truth of that testimony.

THE END.

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